MARVEL

VENOM®

THE SAVAGE SIX

REMENDER • BUNN • WALKER • MEDINA • SHALVEY

JOIN THE FIGHT OF VENOM'S LIFE!

Venom faces a gauntlet of doom as the Crime-Master unites Jack O'Lantern, the Human Fly, Toxin and more to destroy Flash with a plan so diabolical, so vile, it brings war to Flash Thompson's family, Betty Brant and even Peter Parker – and in this war, there will be victims!

Meanwhile, Venom joins the Secret Avengers, but what's left of Flash Thompson to join the team?! Though he aspires to serve his country as an Avenger, even with the symbiote under control, Flash's dark secrets put everything at risk. And the original Venom host, Eddie Brock, is hunting down the remaining symbiote hosts in a murderous holy war.

Collecting *Venom #15-22* — written by Rick Remender and Cullen Bunn; and illustrated by Kev Walker, Lan Medina and Declan Shalvey.

"Remender gives a well deserved, cathartic farewell to the Venom series."
— *IGN.COM*

"A-Plus."
— *NEWSARAMA.COM*

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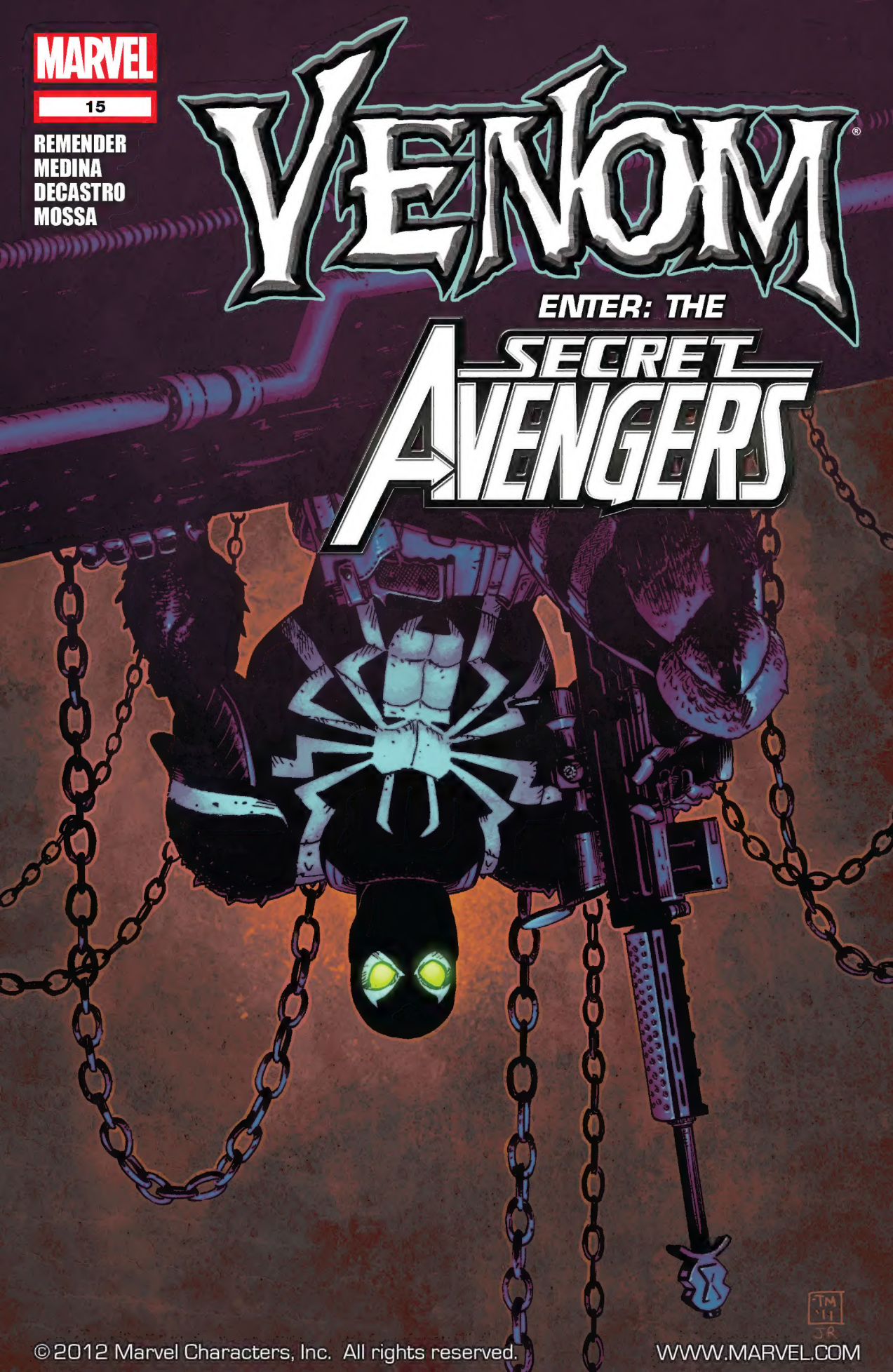

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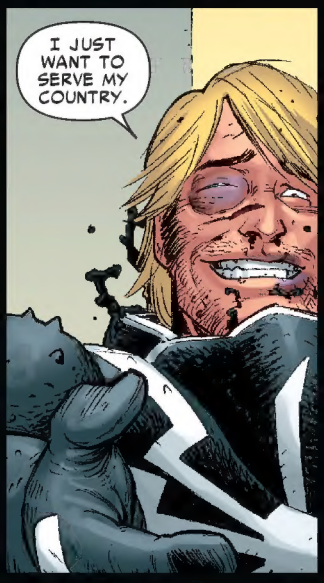
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the Alien Parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was agent...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

AGENT VENOM, YOU'RE COMING WITH US.
AVENGERS, TAKE HIM--
WHOA-WHOA-WHOA-- NO. YOU GOT THE KID ALL WRONG, CAP.
HE SAVED THE DAY, SHOWED REAL GRAVEL. HE'S A HERO.

WE COULD, UH...MAYBE WE COULD HELP MAKE SURE THE SYMBIOTE STAYS DORMANT.
WE COULD POTENTIALLY SHUT OFF THE SYNAPTIC COUPLING CENTER...



But Flash Thompson faces trials back home that Agent Venom can't save him from – Betty Brant, the woman he left behind without reason, and a mother and sister who had no son to lean on when his father passed on...

HOME AGAIN

RICK REMENDER
script

LAN MEDINA
pencils

NELSON DECASTRO w/ TERRY PALLOT
inks

ANDRES MOSSA
colors

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

TONY MOORE & JOHN RAUCH
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

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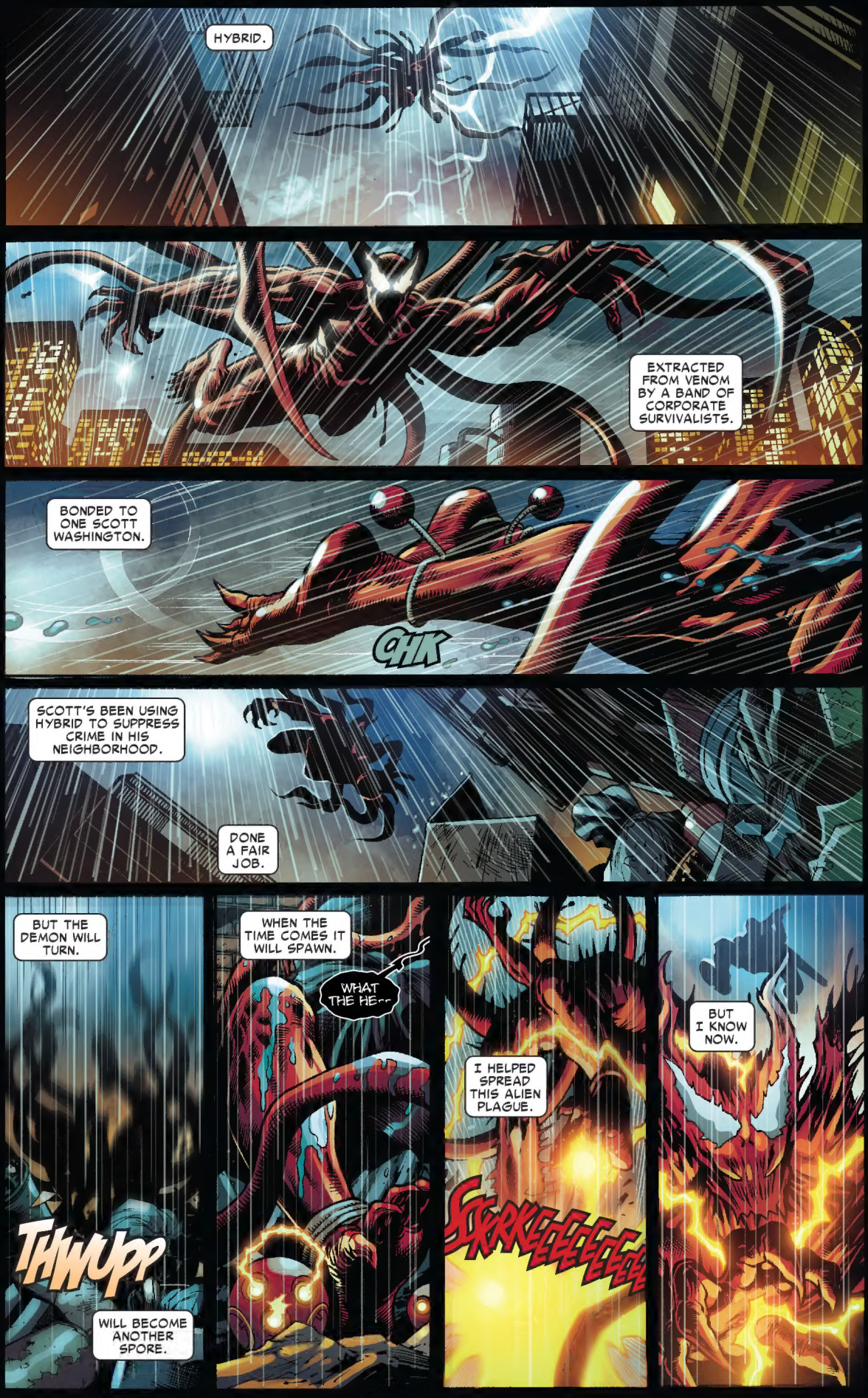
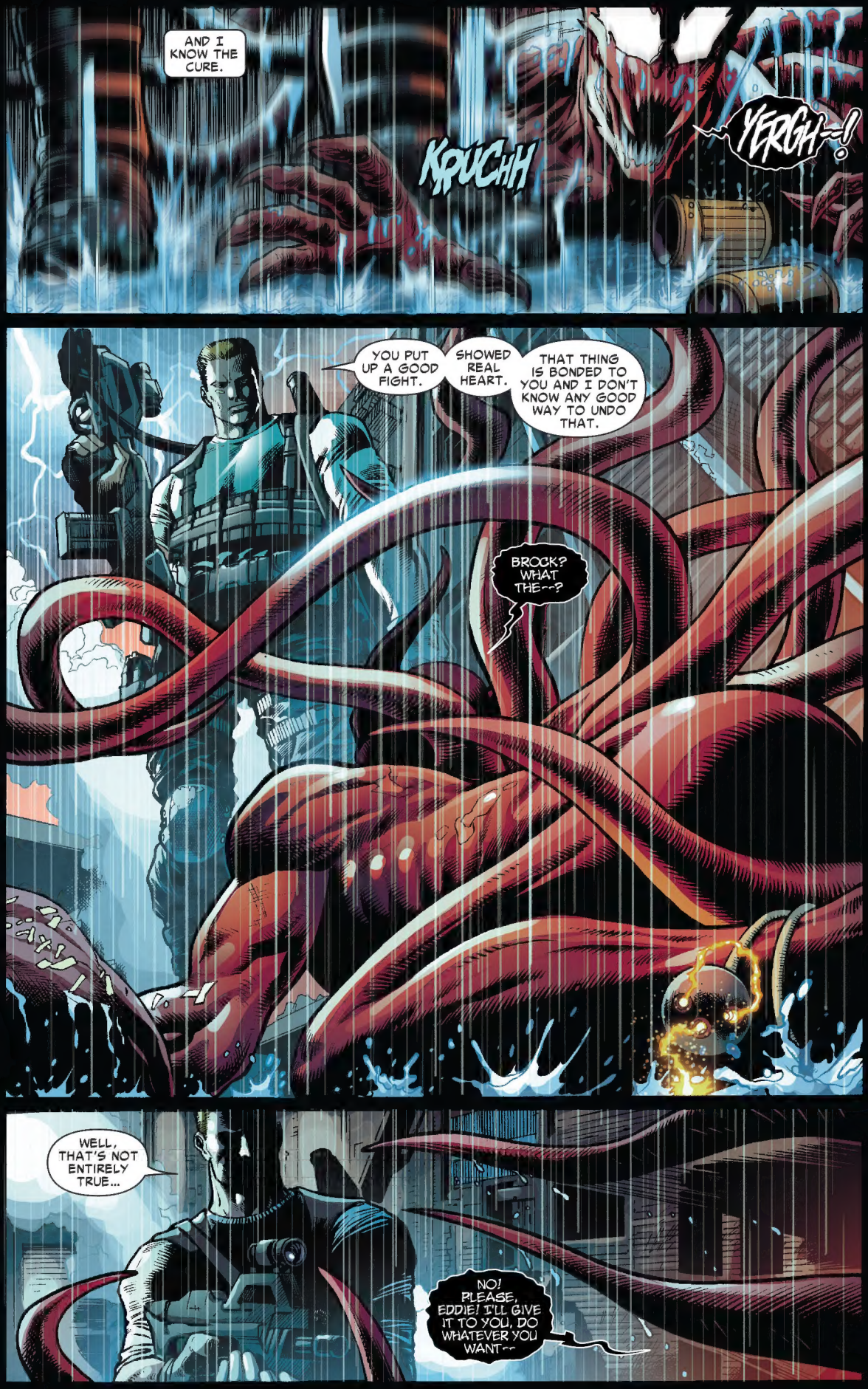

HYBRID.
EXTRACTED FROM VENOM BY A BAND OF CORPORATE SURVIVALISTS.
BONDED TO ONE SCOTT WASHINGTON.
CHK
SCOTT'S BEEN USING HYBRID TO SUPPRESS CRIME IN HIS NEIGHBORHOOD.
DONE A FAIR JOB.
BUT THE DEMON WILL TURN.
THWUPP
WILL BECOME ANOTHER SPORE.
WHEN THE TIME COMES IT WILL SPAWN.
WHAT THE HE--
I HELPED SPREAD THIS ALIEN PLAGUE.
SKRKEEEEEEEEE
BUT I KNOW NOW.

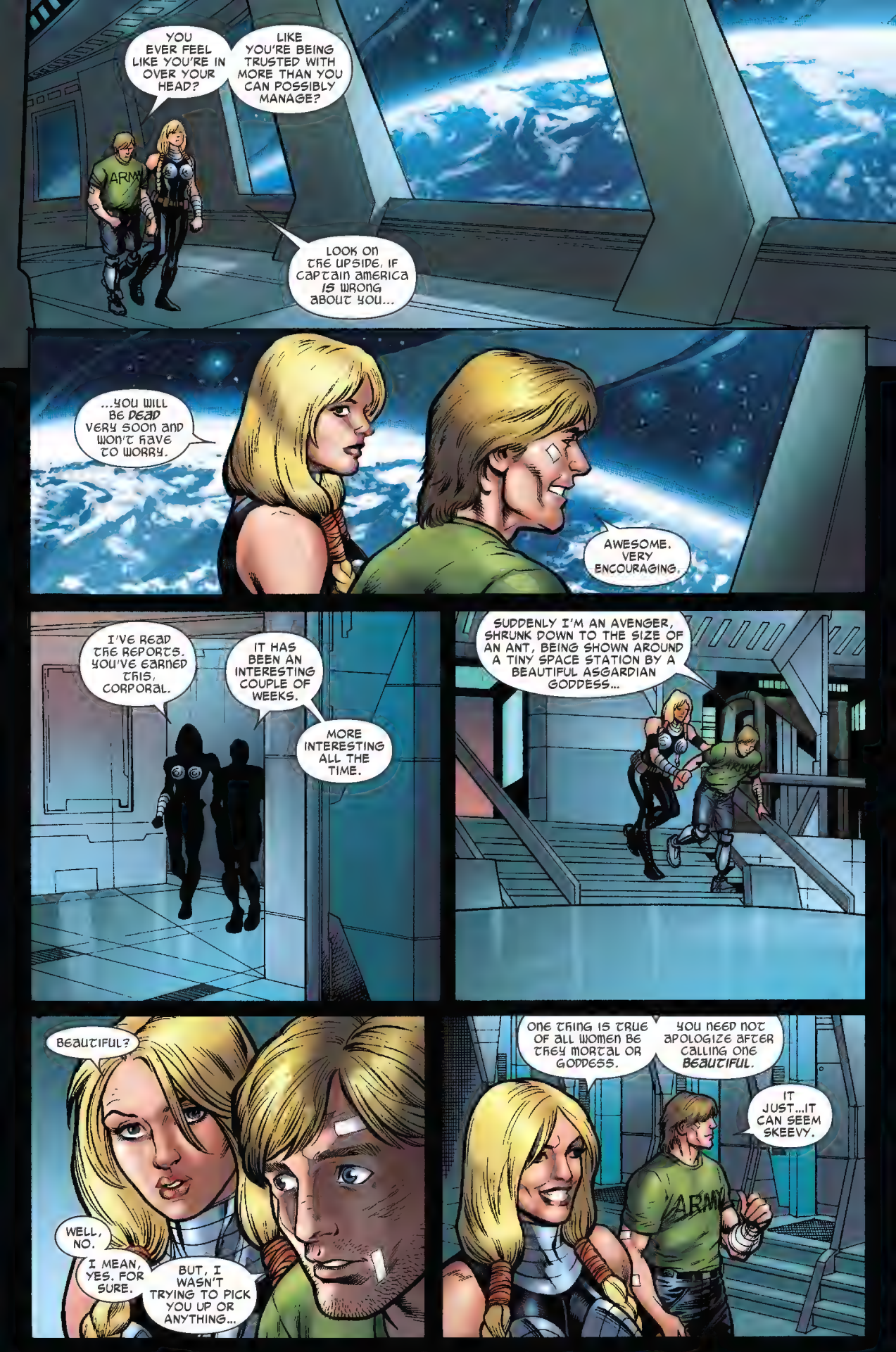

AND I KNOW THE CURE.
KRUCHH
YERGH--!
YOU PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT.
SHOWED REAL HEART.
THAT THING IS BONDED TO YOU AND I DON'T KNOW ANY GOOD WAY TO UNDO THAT.
BROCK? WHAT THE--?
WELL, THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE...
NO! PLEASE, EDDIE! I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU, DO WHATEVER YOU WANT--

I DON'T WANT ANY OF THIS, SCOTT.
BRAK-BRAK-BRAK-BRAK-
GHAKK--
FFFSHHHHH
YERAGHH!
KAKK
D-DON'T...
D-DESERVE... THIS...
NONE OF US DO.
IT'S EITHER YOU NOW...
"...OR THE ENTIRE PLANET LATER."
SO, YES, I THINK WITH THIS THE VENOM SYMBIOTE WILL BE AS SAFE AS ANY OTHER ARMOR OR MAGIC RELIC OR RADIOACTIVE NIPPLE LASERS OR WHATEVER THE REST OF US USE.
The Lighthouse Space Station.
HEADQUARTERS OF THE SECRET AVENGERS.

RADIOACTIVE NIPPLE LASER MAN ISN'T AN AVENGER ANYMORE, BEAST. DON'T YOU READ THE NEWSLETTER?
ENOUGH. REASSURE US THAT THIS MONSTER CAN BE TRUSTED WITH OUR LIVES ON THE FIELD.
THE GOVERNMENT SCIENTISTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NEURO-INHIBITOR THAT SUBDUES THE SYMBIOTE'S MIND WERE ONLY HALF WAY THERE, VALKYRIE.
THE SERUM WAS MISSING A FEW COMPONENTS THAT DR. PYM AND I BELIEVE WILL OFFER A MORE... COMPLETE SUBDUING EFFECT.
CORPORAL THOMPSON WILL BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE SYMBIOTE WITHOUT IT PERMANENTLY BONDING TO HIM?
IT ALREADY HAS.
YES. WHEN IT'S NOT BEING USED FOR OFFICIAL AVENGERS BUSINESS IT STAYS HERE, UNDER MY CONTROL.
HANK, THE SYMBIOTE PYMP.
I'VE GOT ENEMIES.
I MIGHT NEED THIS THING IN A REAL HURRY ONE DAY.
HURTS TO BE AWAY.
YOU'RE AN AVENGER NOW, FLASH. YOU DON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH THAT SORT OF THING ALONE ANYMORE.
SURE. I KNOW.
BUT I'M WORRIED I'LL END UP IN AN AWKWARD SITUATION AND NOT HAVE THE SYMBIOTE WHEN I NEED IT.
NEED IT NOW.
BURNING IN MY CHEST.

I'M GIVING YOU A NUMBER, IN AN EMERGENCY YOU DIAL IT.
THE SYMBIOTE'S CONTAINMENT VESSEL WILL BE FLOODED WITH PYM PARTICLES, SHRUNK DOWN TO SUBATOMIC SIZE AND BROADCAST TO THE PHONE YOU'RE CALLING FROM.
SO I JUST CALL THIS NUMBER AND...
THE SYMBIOTE WILL EMERGE FROM THE EARPIECE.
THE TEMPORARY EFFECTS OF THE UNSTABLE PYM PARTICLES WILL BE NEGATED, AND YOU'LL HAVE YOUR SEDATED SYMBIOTE.
TEP TEP
ACT INDIFFERENT.
WE'LL MONITOR YOUR USAGE.
TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T ABUSE YOUR ACCESS TO THE SUIT.
WE NEED TO ENSURE YOU'RE NEVER BONDED TO IT.
YOU WERE WEARING THE SUIT WITH NO SEDATIVES FOR DAYS ON END.
BONDING TIME HAS VARIED BASED ON THE USER.
DO YOU FEEL ANY PHYSICAL OR MENTAL WITHDRAWALS?
SELL IT CALM.
LIKE I PRACTICED.
NO.
NOW THAT I'VE GOT THE HANG OF THESE PROSTHETIC LEGS, I'M DAMN GLAD TO BE RID OF THE THING FOR A WHILE.
YOU GOT LUCKY.

I'M GLAD THAT WE COULD MAKE THIS WORK.
TO BE ABLE TO TAKE SOMETHING THAT CAUSED SO MUCH PAIN AND USE IT FOR THE GOOD OF HUMANITY...
I KNOW YOU WON'T LET ME DOWN, CORPORAL.
NO, CAPTAIN, I WON'T.
COME. I WILL SEND YOU HOME.
ARMY
'LOT RIDING ON THAT MAN.
YES. IF HE'S LYING...WE COULD HAVE A PROBLEM.
AND THEN THERE'S THE OTHER VERY REAL DILEMMA...
...ARE YOU GOING TO TELL SPIDER-MAN?


YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOU'RE IN OVER YOUR HEAD?
LIKE YOU'RE BEING TRUSTED WITH MORE THAN YOU CAN POSSIBLY MANAGE?
LOOK ON THE UPSIDE, IF CAPTAIN AMERICA IS WRONG ABOUT YOU...
...YOU WILL BE DEAD VERY SOON AND WON'T HAVE TO WORRY.
AWESOME. VERY ENCOURAGING.
I'VE READ THE REPORTS. YOU'VE EARNED THIS, CORPORAL.
IT HAS BEEN AN INTERESTING COUPLE OF WEEKS.
MORE INTERESTING ALL THE TIME.
SUDDENLY I'M AN AVENGER, SHRUNK DOWN TO THE SIZE OF AN ANT, BEING SHOWN AROUND A TINY SPACE STATION BY A BEAUTIFUL ASGARDIAN GODDESS...
BEAUTIFUL?
WELL, NO.
I MEAN, YES. FOR SURE.
BUT, I WASN'T TRYING TO PICK YOU UP OR ANYTHING...
ONE THING IS TRUE OF ALL WOMEN BE THEY MORTAL OR GODDESS.
YOU NEED NOT APOLOGIZE AFTER CALLING ONE BEAUTIFUL.
IT JUST...IT CAN SEEM SKEEVY.

ONLY IF YOU'RE TRYING TO GET ME INTO BED.
I'M SORRY, REALLY, I'D NEVER TRY...
I MEAN...
ARMY
MOMENTS AGO I WAS BEAUTIFUL.
OH, YOU ARE, I JUST...
ARMY
I'VE GOT A GIRLFRIEND.
OR I DID...WE MIGHT BE GETTING BACK TOGETHER.
I APPRECIATE YOU LETTING ME DOWN EASY.
NO, I WASN'T SAYING YOU WERE INTERESTED-- I WAS, IT'S JUST--
BANG BANG
FLASH?!
OPEN THE DOOR, BUDDY.
IT'S PETE.
BANG BANG
LOOK, I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE.
YOUR LANDLADY SAID YOU HAVEN'T LEFT THE APARTMENT IN DAYS.

H-HEY, PETER.
SORRY, I WAS... IN THE SHOWER.
I THINK IT'S STRANGE THAT YOU SHOWER IN ALL OF YOUR CLOTHES AND THAT YOU DON'T GET YOUR HAIR WET.
WELL... YEAH... THAT IS STRANGE...
NO BOOZE.
WHEN'D YOU BECOME MY MOTHER, PARKER?
WHEN BETTY SHOWED UP AT MY HOUSE A FEW DAYS AGO, HYSTERICAL, IN TEARS.
SAID SHE'D BEEN STAYING WITH YOUR MOM, TO HELP CONSOLE HER. SAID YOU LEFT TOWN FOR "WORK."
SAID YOU CALLED HER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND BROKE UP WITH HER OVER THE PHONE.
SO SHE CALLED THE V.A.
YOUR SUPERVISOR?
NOBODY DOWN THERE'D EVER HEARD OF HIM.

AFTER DAD DIED... I STARTED DRINKING.
I GOT STONE DRUNK AND I STAYED THAT WAY.
ALL I REMEMBER OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS IS OCCASIONALLY WAKING UP, SCRAPING MYSELF UP OFF OF THE FLOOR AND SHUFFLING MYSELF OUT THE DOOR TO GET MORE WHISKEY.
YEAH. OKAY.
C'MON...
"...LET'S GET SOME FRESH AIR."
SCREAM.
ANOTHER VENOM SPAWN.

THE HOST, DONNA DIEGO, IS A DELUSIONAL SCHIZOPHRENIC.
BAK
TRIED TO KILL ME ONCE UPON A TIME.
SMART AS A WHIP--HARD TO TRACK.
SO I BRING HER TO ME.
SHE'LL HAVE HEARD ABOUT HYBRID.
HEARD ABOUT THE OTHERS.
SHE'LL FOLLOW THE TRAIL I LEFT...
FOLLOW IT TO PURIFICATION.
THANKS FOR COMING, DONNA.

EASIER TO DO THIS HERE.
AAIIEEEE--!
SSKRKEEE

SSKRKEEE

BUT WHAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
...WHY TAKE BETTY DOWN WITH YOU?
I BROKE UP WITH HER TO KEEP HER AWAY FROM ME, PETE.
TO KEEP HER FROM GOING DOWN WITH ME.
BETTY'S BEEN THROUGH A LOT, TOO.
THE WAY YOU HANDLED THIS... IT'S LIKE YOU'RE GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO MAKE IT WORSE.
YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO.
HOW WOULD I?
LAST COUPLE MONTHS IT'S LIKE YOU'RE NOT EVEN HERE ANYMORE.
AND THIS IS COMING FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE "STRETCHED-TOO-THIN" FAN CLUB.
IT'S COMPLICATED.
THEN TELL ME ABOUT IT.

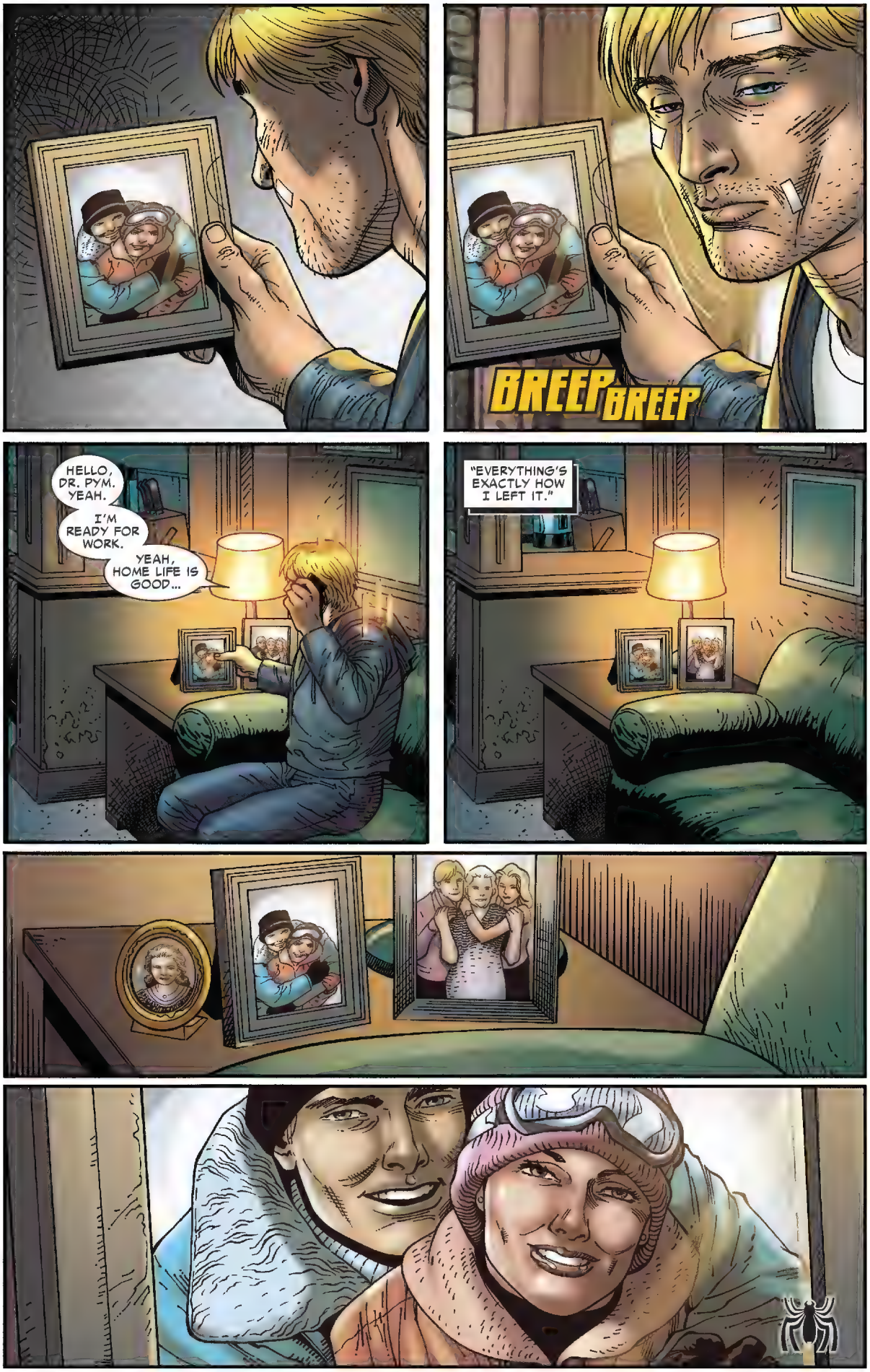
WHAT I'M GOING TO TELL YOU...YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE STRONG OPINIONS, PETE.
YOU...YOU PROMISE TO KEEP IT BETWEEN US? NO MATTER WHAT.
I PROMISE.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN...
BREEP BREEP BREEP BREEP
IT'S MY SISTER.
I HAVE TO TAKE THIS.
Jessie
HEY, JESS.
YEAH, BEEN BACK FOR A FEW DAYS NOW.
I GOT... TIED UP.
I KNOW. YEAH.
I HAVE TO MAKE A LIVING, I COULDN'T JUST QUIT MY JOB.
I GET IT. I DO.
OKAY. ALL RIGHT. I'LL BE OVER THERE IN A BIT.

I HAVE TO GO SEE MY MOM. I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE THE FUNERAL.
ANOTHER MESS I'VE MADE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
WE'LL CATCH UP LATER.
HEY, JESSE... MOM.
YOU'RE USING THE LEGS.
TAKING SOME TIME TO GET USED TO.
ON THE ROAD THE WHEELCHAIR WAS TOO MUCH OF A HASSLE.
SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'M SORRY I HAD TO GO AWAY SO SOON AFTER THE FUNERAL.
I DIDN'T HAVE ANY CHOICE IN--
EUGENE, I LIVED WITH A LYING DRUNK FOR 46 YEARS, GOD REST HIS SOUL.

IF YOU CAN'T TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU, DON'T TELL ME ANYTHING.
I NEVER ASKED VERY MUCH OF YOU. BUT I'M TELLING YOU RIGHT NOW, IF YOU WANT A RELATIONSHIP WITH ME THERE'S ONE RULE.
NO MORE LYING.
TOLD HER I'D BEEN DRINKING.
TOLD HER I WAS BACK IN THE PROGRAM.
LOOKED HER IN THE FACE AND LIED.
NO OTHER WAY.
CAN'T TELL HER THE TRUTH.
TRUTH IS-- I PUT HER IN DANGER.
STILL IN DANGER.
CRIME MASTER...STILL OUT THERE.
HE AND JACK O' LANTERN--THE LAST PIECES OF MY MISTAKES.
LAST THING I HAVE TO SET RIGHT.
THEN I CAN START OVER.
WORK THE STEPS.
BE A HERO.

WORK THINGS OUT...
BETTY?
REMEMBER THIS TRIP TO ASPEN?
OF COURSE.
YOU TOLD ME SOME FRIEND HAD CANCELED ON YOU, STUCK YOU WITH A CHALET.
I KNEW YOU'D PLANNED IT TO GET US BACK TOGETHER.
YOU *USED TO BE* SO BAD AT LYING.
I REMEMBER THINKING THAT I SHOULDN'T GO.
SHOULDN'T GET BACK TOGETHER WITH YOU.
JUST SAVE MYSELF THE FUTURE HEARTBREAK.
BETTY--
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO ME.
YOU DON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO TALK TO ME FACE-TO-FACE SO YOU DON'T GET TO TALK TO ME FACE-TO-FACE.
YOU GET TO LISTEN.
I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR FATHER.
I KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILDHOOD DID TO YOU, AND I KNOW THAT YOU CAN'T SHAKE IT.
GIVEN WHAT YOU GREW UP WITH IT'S AMAZING YOU CAME OUT AS WELL AS YOU DID.
BUT THE MAN YOU ARE ISN'T ENOUGH FOR ME.

SPENDING THE LAST WEEK WITH YOUR MOTHER--WHILE YOU WERE DRUNK IN A DITCH--OPENED MY EYES.
WHAT YOUR FATHER PUT HER THROUGH IS NOT GOING TO BE MY FUTURE.
SO YOU DON'T GET TO CALL AND BREAK UP WITH ME, FLASH.
BECAUSE IF YOU BREAK UP WITH ME IT MEANS AT SOME POINT YOU'RE GOING TO THINK YOU CAN COME AND WIN ME BACK.
I WON'T LIVE MY LIFE TRYING TO CHANGE AND FIX YOU.
I WANT TO MAKE THIS AS CLEAR AS I POSSIBLY CAN--
WE WON'T *EVER* BE GETTING BACK TOGETHER.
SLAM


BREEP BREEP
HELLO, DR. PYM. YEAH.
I'M READY FOR WORK.
YEAH, HOME LIFE IS GOOD...
"EVERYTHING'S EXACTLY HOW I LEFT IT."

SYMBIWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

A-Venom-Gers Assemble, Symbi-Fans!

As you'll no-doubt note, in this issue we tipped our hats to the fact that our boy Flash is now one of Earth's Mightiest Heroes over in the (shhh!) SECRET AVENGERS, also written by our very own Rick Remender!

He made his official debut in that book in Secret Avengers #23, and you can pick up his ongoing adventures as one of Hawkeye's Not-to-be-messed-with Nonnet on-sale likely just down the rack from this very mag! In the months to come you'll be seeing the changes in Flash's life as a member of the Avengers – but even they won't be able to stop the SAVAGE SIX!

That's right, we are but a scant three issues away from Rick, Cullen and Lan's malevolent magnum opus of mayhem, so while they gear up for the grisly, Kev Walker (THUNDERBOLTS) stops by as guest artist in two weeks as Venom goes head-to-head with the Hobgoblin for the life of the Human Fly! Kev will be back for a most sinister SAVAGE SIX PROLOGUE – one where Eddie Brock's path of destruction takes aim at Venom AND the Crime Master! How big is SAVAGE SIX? Everytime I try to print a script, my computer crashes!

So it's a busy couple months for our boy Flash – this on the heels of the epic Circle of Four. Folks can't stop talking about Venom, Red Hulk, X-23 and Ghost Rider doing up Vegas – the reviews are in!

"The Circle of Four mini-event has been a rousing success…one of Marvel's best events in recent memory. It's a damn entertaining read from start to finish" ~IGN.com

"One major success…is that we don't need to know a single thing of what has come before to enjoy ourselves on this romp of a tale. The characters explain themselves easily, their motives are clear, and the team-up makes sense in the context of the narrative. It's… the sort of broad quest a variety of readers could get behind." ~ComicBookResources.com

"There is plenty of action and surprises that makes this arc begin on the right foot." ~ComicVine.com

"I was surprised to find that it all works within the confines of the story, and the story is a hell of a lot of FUN…This was a mad-cap romp, dammit. I don't care if you don't like Ghost Rider being a girl, or Hulks that are red. If you like romps that are mad-cappy, then by all means, get on this book." ~Aint It Cool News.

One of our stalwart fans also wanted to chime in:

Hi, Symbiwrote!

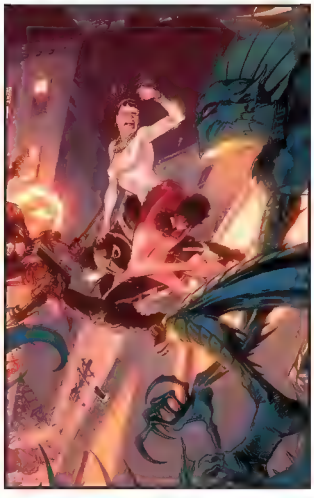
Wow. What a story. I just finished reading Venom 13.4 and I am just loving this arc. As a reader I never found myself interested in the Hulk or The Ghost Rider but Circle of Four introduced me to characters and themes that I don't typically see in the Marvel books I read. The story was engrossing and the art was always fantastic.

The character introduced in the last page of Venom 13.4 looks unbelievably cool and I can't wait to see it kick some demonic butt! I can't wait for the conclusion to this story and I certainly hope that Venom teams up with the Hulk, Ghost Rider, and X-23 in some future stories!

Dave McGuinness

Another big bag o'congrats to Rick, Jeff, Rob, Tony and the rest of the CIRCLE OF FOUR Gang!

And if you thought CIRCLE OF FOUR was intense, again, you ain't seen nothin' till you've seen the SAVAGE SIX! Check out these covers by Michael Del Mundo and Tony Moore!



That's all the room we have this time around, but please keep writing us at spideyoffice@marvel.com. As mentioned, next up, Venom, the Human Fly and the Hobgoblin trash the trains and wreak havoc across New York City, so sit down and strap in, and we'll see you in two weeks!

--Temerarious Tom

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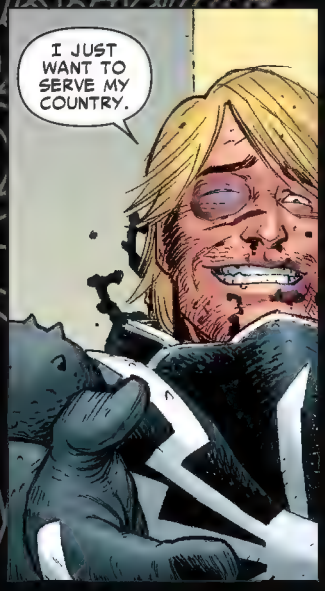

CLEMENCY

RICK REMENDER
script

KEV WALKER
artist

CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
colors

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

MICHAEL DEL MUNDO
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

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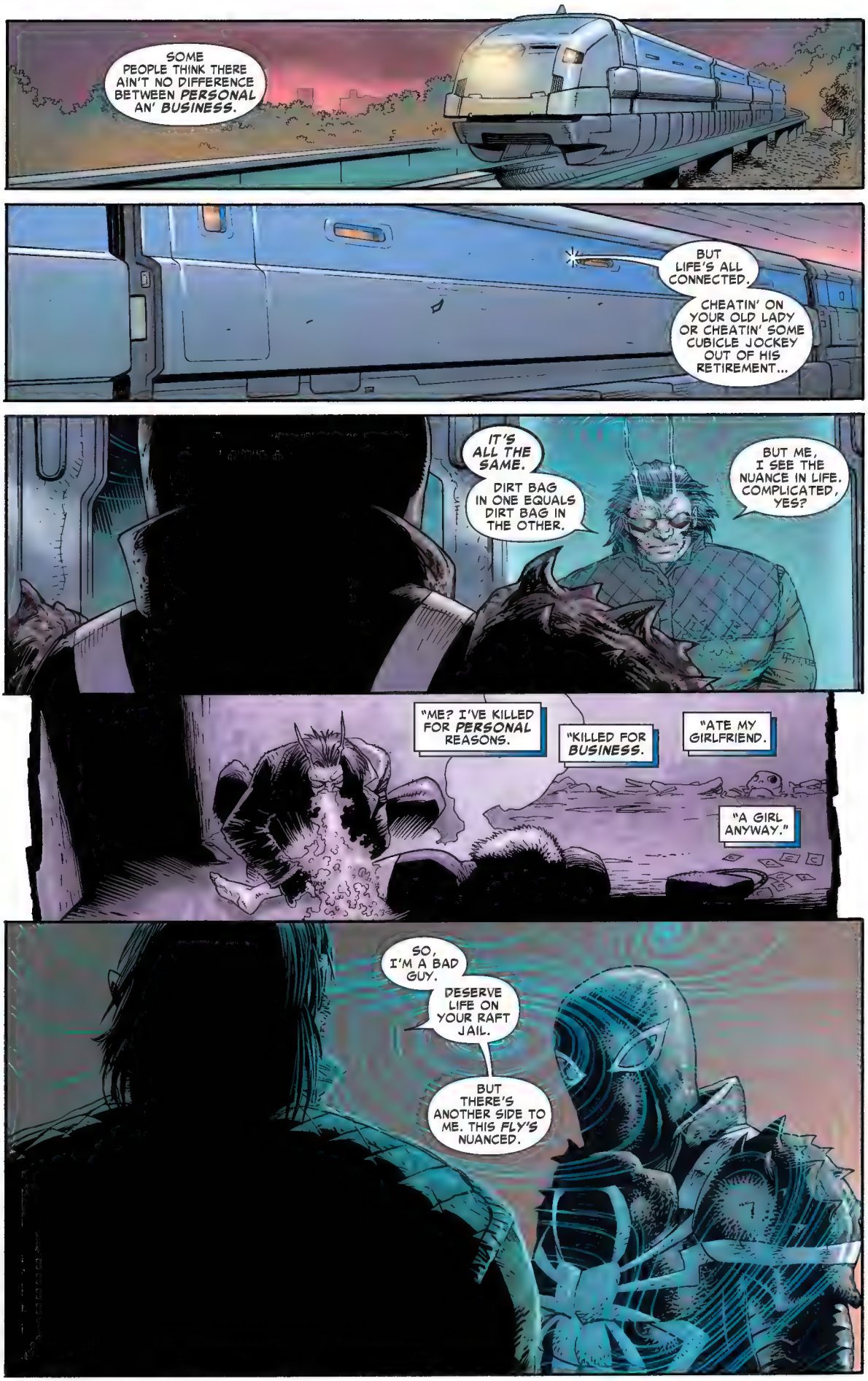
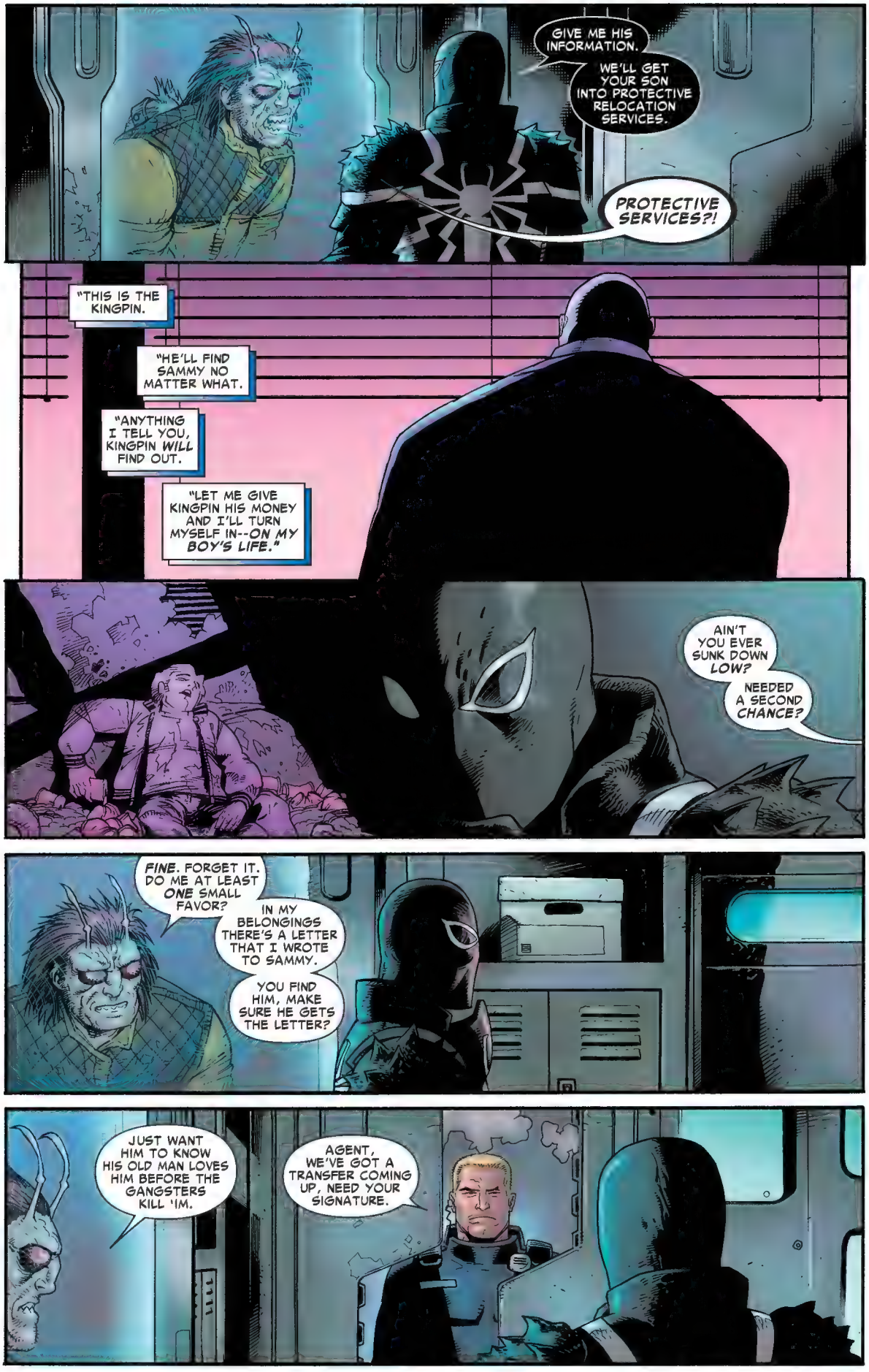
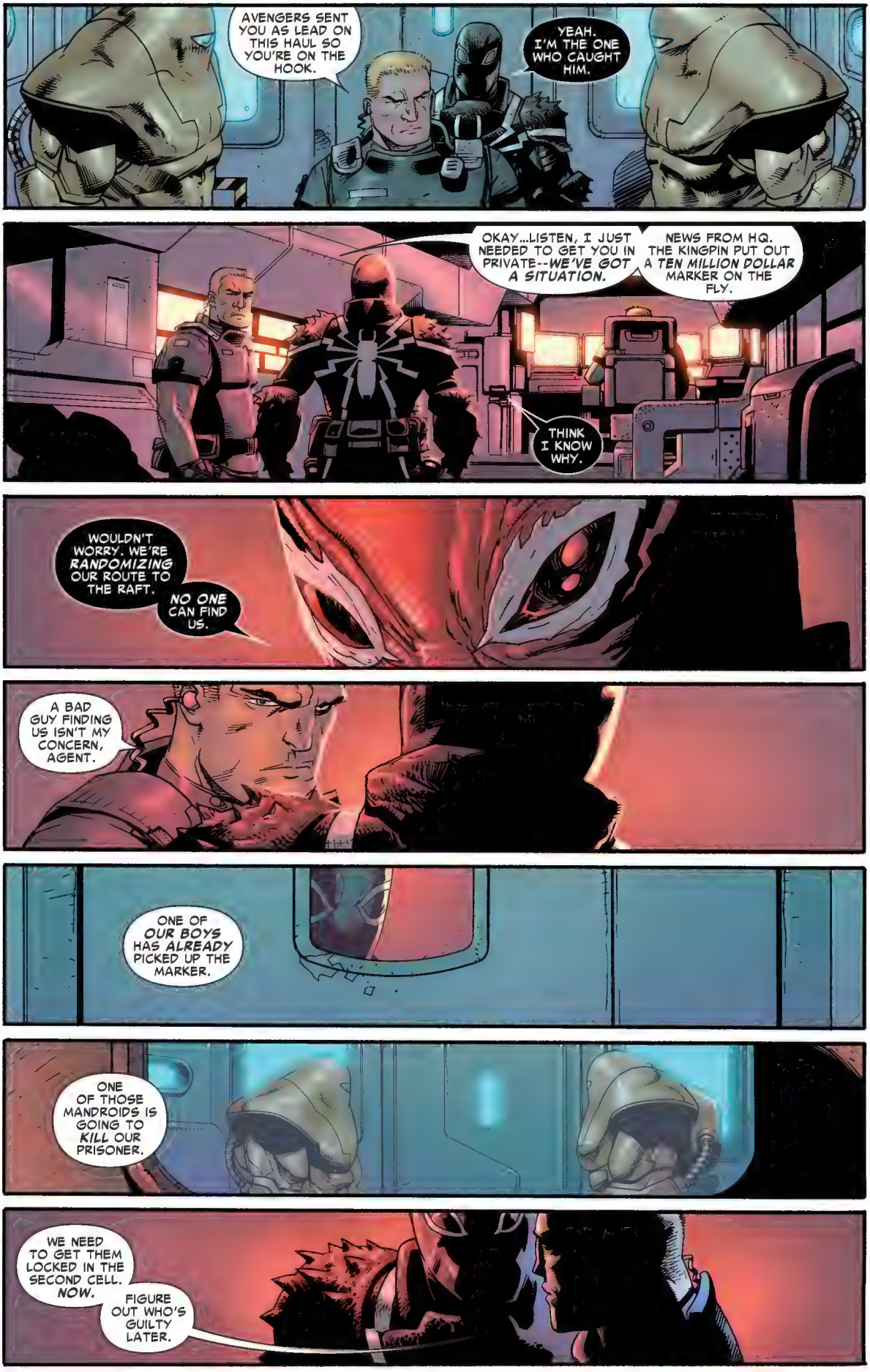

SOME PEOPLE THINK THERE AIN'T NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSONAL AN' BUSINESS.
BUT LIFE'S ALL CONNECTED.
CHEATIN' ON YOUR OLD LADY OR CHEATIN' SOME CUBICLE JOCKEY OUT OF HIS RETIREMENT...
IT'S ALL THE SAME.
DIRT BAG IN ONE EQUALS DIRT BAG IN THE OTHER.
BUT ME, I SEE THE NUANCE IN LIFE. COMPLICATED, YES?
"ME? I'VE KILLED FOR PERSONAL REASONS.
"KILLED FOR BUSINESS.
"ATE MY GIRLFRIEND.
"A GIRL ANYWAY."
SO, I'M A BAD GUY.
DESERVE LIFE ON YOUR RAFT JAIL.
BUT THERE'S ANOTHER SIDE TO ME. THIS FLY'S NUANCED.

"A WEEK BEFORE YOU CAUGHT ME, I SWIPED COUPLE-FEW MILLION DOLLARS FROM A HUMAN TRAFFICKING, DRUG-DONKEY, UGLINESS-PARADE OPERATED BY...
"...NONE OTHER THAN...
"...WAIT FOR IT...
"...THE KINGPIN!"
AND YOU WANT TO BRIBE ME?
BIG HERO LIKE YOU--? NAH. MY PLAN'S BUILT ON YOU BEING A GOOD GUY.
SEE, THE OTHER SIDE TO ME, SIDE I BET NO ONE TOLD YOU ABOUT--
I HAVE A SON.
SAMMY, NINE YEARS OLD.
"I STOLE THAT MONEY TO BUY SAMMY A FUTURE. I OWE HIM.
"BOY'S MOTHER ABANDONED HIM.
"I AIN'T AROUND FOR 'IM.
"CRIME WAS MY OPTION."
AIN'T CUT AND DRY LIKE YOU WANT IT TO BE.
I'M A BAD GUY, TRUE, BUT I LOVE MY BOY.
AND KINGPIN GONNA KILL MY SAMMY IF I DON'T RETURN HIS MONEY.


GIVE ME HIS INFORMATION.
WE'LL GET YOUR SON INTO PROTECTIVE RELOCATION SERVICES.
PROTECTIVE SERVICES?!
"THIS IS THE KINGPIN.
"HE'LL FIND SAMMY NO MATTER WHAT.
"ANYTHING I TELL YOU, KINGPIN WILL FIND OUT.
"LET ME GIVE KINGPIN HIS MONEY AND I'LL TURN MYSELF IN--ON MY BOY'S LIFE."
AIN'T YOU EVER SUNK DOWN LOW?
NEEDED A SECOND CHANCE?
FINE. FORGET IT. DO ME AT LEAST ONE SMALL FAVOR?
IN MY BELONGINGS THERE'S A LETTER THAT I WROTE TO SAMMY.
YOU FIND HIM, MAKE SURE HE GETS THE LETTER?
JUST WANT HIM TO KNOW HIS OLD MAN LOVES HIM BEFORE THE GANGSTERS KILL 'IM.
AGENT, WE'VE GOT A TRANSFER COMING UP, NEED YOUR SIGNATURE.


AVENGERS SENT YOU AS LEAD ON THIS HAUL SO YOU'RE ON THE HOOK.
YEAH. I'M THE ONE WHO CAUGHT HIM.
OKAY...LISTEN, I JUST NEEDED TO GET YOU IN PRIVATE--*WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.*
NEWS FROM HQ. THE KINGPIN PUT OUT A *TEN MILLION DOLLAR* MARKER ON THE FLY.
THINK I KNOW WHY.
WOULDN'T WORRY. WE'RE *RANDOMIZING* OUR ROUTE TO THE RAFT.
NO ONE CAN FIND US.
A BAD GUY FINDING US ISN'T MY CONCERN, AGENT.
ONE OF *OUR BOYS* HAS *ALREADY* PICKED UP THE MARKER.
ONE OF THOSE MANDROIDS IS GOING TO *KILL* OUR PRISONER.
WE NEED TO GET THEM LOCKED IN THE SECOND CELL. *NOW.*
FIGURE OUT WHO'S GUILTY LATER.

WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.
I JUST GOT WORD FROM HQ--AGENT DALRYMPLE HERE ACCEPTED A BRIBE TO ASSASSINATE OUR PRISONER.
SERIOUSLY?
THE SOURCE SAYS HE'S RIGGED THE FLY'S HOLDING CELL TO BLOW.
WE GOTTA MOVE HIM.
YOU TWO WAIT IN THE SECOND CELL.
I'LL BRING FLY TO YOU TO SECURE.
YES, SIR.
YOU SURE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'?
KEEPING YOU SAFE.
YOU BRINGING HIM HERE--
DON'T EXACTLY FILL ME WITH CONFIDENCE.
SIR-- GAAKK--

HI.
I'M NOT AGENT DALRYMPLE.
I'M THE HOBGOBLIN.
SHRUKK
GRAGHH--

NO NEED TO TRY AND CALL FOR HELP, I'VE SCRAMBLED ALL OUTGOING SIGNALS.
LET ME OUTTA HERE! LET ME OUT!
MY EMPLOYER WOULD LIKE TO OFFER YOU A CONTRACT, MR. VENOM.
FIRST HELP ME KILL THE HUMAN FLY...
...AND THEN HELP KILL CRIME-MASTER AND JACK O' LANTERN.
WE KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HUNTING LEADS ON THEM.
WIPING OUT THREE PSYCHOS MUST SOUND APPEALING TO SOME PART OF YOU.

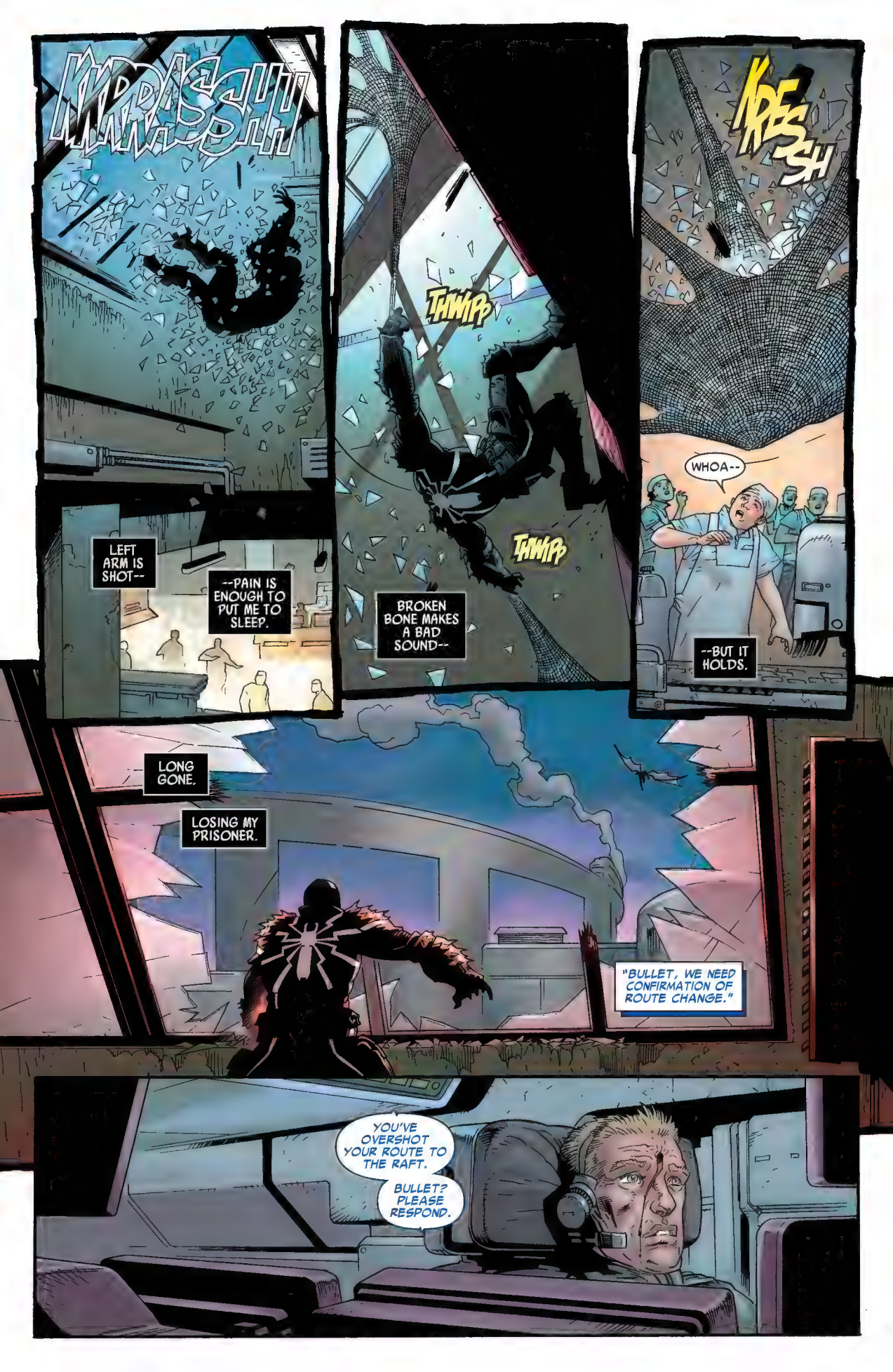
MY EMPLOYER WILL PAY YOU TEN MILLION IN CASH FOR THIS HELP.
EAS-SY. HE'S LISTENING IN. ALWAYS LISTENING.
YOUR EMPLOYER IS A FAT PIECE OF--
THINK FOR A SECOND.
TEN MILLION BUYS YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT--SERVANTS, A BEACH HOUSE, A CHALET IN THE MOUNTAINS, A NAKED LADY PARTY YACHT-- HAPPINESS.
YOU'RE ALREADY PLANNING ON KILLING CRIME-MASTER.
SEEN YOU SKULKING ABOUT HIS BASE LOOKING FOR A CLEAR SHOT.
SO, WHY NOT GET RICH TO BOOT?
TEN MILLION. YEAH. OKAY.
IT'S A DEAL.
YOU CAN'T TRUST THESE PEOPLE!
MY EMPLOYER PAYS HIS DEBTS, YOU'LL SOON SEE, MR. DEACON.
FINE--SURE! GO RIGHT AHEAD! MAYBE YOU CAN HELP THEM KILL MY SON, TOO.
DOES IT MAKE YOU MAD, DEACON?

DOES IT MAKE YOU MAD ENOUGH TO SPIT?
WHAT? WHAT KIND OF A...OH, I GET IT.
MAD ENOUGH TO--
GLOORFF
YERAGHH!
HURTS. GOOD TRICK.
FFSSHHH
GOT A FEW UP MY OWN SLEEVE.
GGGG

OKAY. YOU'VE FLUSHED AWAY ALL THE GOOD OPTIONS, VENOM.
AND EVERYBODY THINKS IT'S THE *VILLAINS* WHO ARE...
...CRAZY.

SCREEEHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
ARAGAHH!
HIGH-PITCHED, HUH?
SYMBIOTE IS NOT A FAN. FIRE EITHER, RIGHT?
SWWM
GHRAGH--
CONDUCTOR'S NOT ANSWERING AND SOMEONE'S JAMMED THE DOORS!
GET ME A CHARGE, WE'LL HAVE TO BLOW IT OPEN.
O-OPEN?! YOU CAN'T EXPECT US TO GO RUNNING INTO THERE?!
NO WAY. THE MAN DON'T PAY ME ENOUGH.
SCREEEHAHAHAHAHH!
HOW DOES IT FEEL?!
THWIP
ABOUT TO FEEL A BIT BETTER--

KWAHHWOOOOM
HERACLITUS OF EPHESUS TAUGHT THAT THE UNIVERSE WAS MADE OF FIRE.
LOOK AT YOU, GOING FERAL SO SOON AND FOR NO REASON.
LET ME GIVE YOU A REASON.
GHRAGH!
SHWUNK
"IT'S JUST A QUICK RUN, ROOKIE.
"YOU'LL BE BACK IN TIME FOR THE KNICKS/NETS GAME."
GONNA PUNCH HAWKEYE IN HIS UGLY, ARROW-LAUNCHING NOSE WHEN I GET BACK.


KRRASH
LEFT ARM IS SHOT--
--PAIN IS ENOUGH TO PUT ME TO SLEEP.
THWIPP
THWIPP
BROKEN BONE MAKES A BAD SOUND--
KRESH
WHOA--
--BUT IT HOLDS.
LONG GONE.
LOSING MY PRISONER.
"BULLET, WE NEED CONFIRMATION OF ROUTE CHANGE."
YOU'VE OVERSHOT YOUR ROUTE TO THE RAFT.
BULLET? PLEASE RESPOND.

THAT'S A GOOD SIGN. BOTH OUTTA MY WAY.
BOOGIE TIME.
FFSSHHHH
OKAY. THIS IS WHAT GOOD LUCK FEELS LIKE?
THIS PARTY'S IN YOUR HONOR--
LEAVING IN THE MIDDLE?
HOOF--
TWOKK
BAD FORM.
SHRKOOOOM
HOLY--!

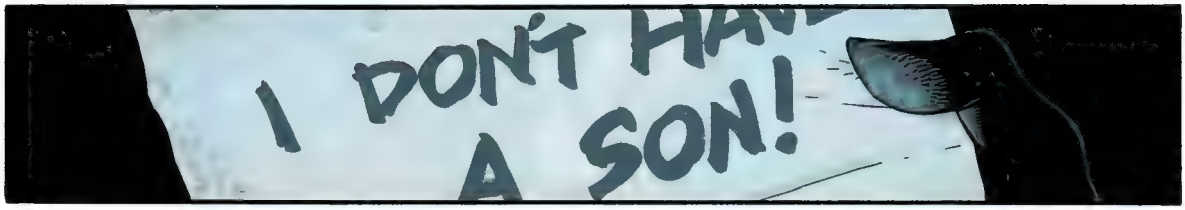
MY WINGS ARE FULL OF DEATH POISON!
GHAA-
SHRULIDD
MY BELLY FULL OF-- GLORFF
YERAGHAGH!
FFISHHHH
YOU LISTENIN', KINGPIN?
CHOMP
ARAGHAHH!
I'M EATIN' YOUR ASSASSIN.
YOU HEAR ME CHEWIN'?!

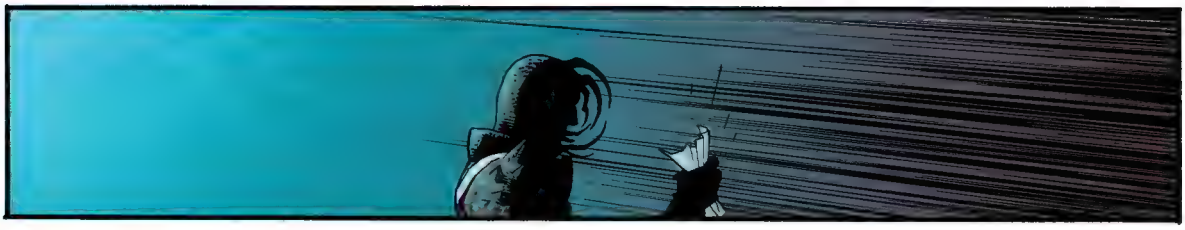
NEXT I'M COMIN' FOR YO--
GHRAGH!
SHNK
TELL ME WHERE OUR MONEY IS--I'LL KILL YOU QUICK.
QUICKISH, ANYWAY.
YOU DON'T SCARE ME.
I TAKE YOU--NO QUESTIONS--I TAKE YOU DOWN.
BOTH OF YOU! HANDS ON YOUR HEAD!
RIGHT NOW!
TIME-OUT THE FIGHT FOR JUST ONE SECOND HERE, DEACON?
COPS. ALWAYS WITH THE WARNINGS.
BRAKOOOM
WHERE WERE WE?

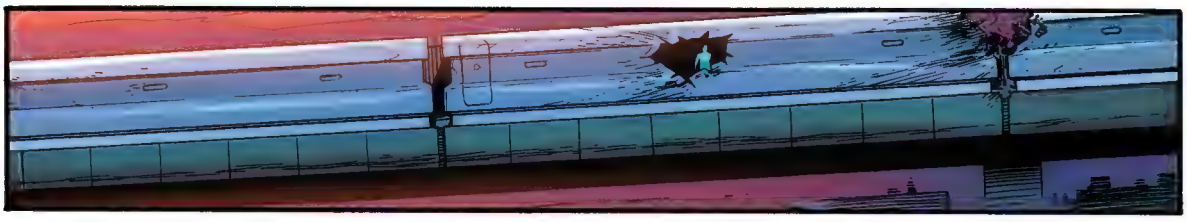
HUH--?
GRRROOOM
THWOOP
YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME TO STOP ME.
I'LL DIE BEFORE I SEE THAT PIG HURT MY BOY.
HELP! PLEASE--

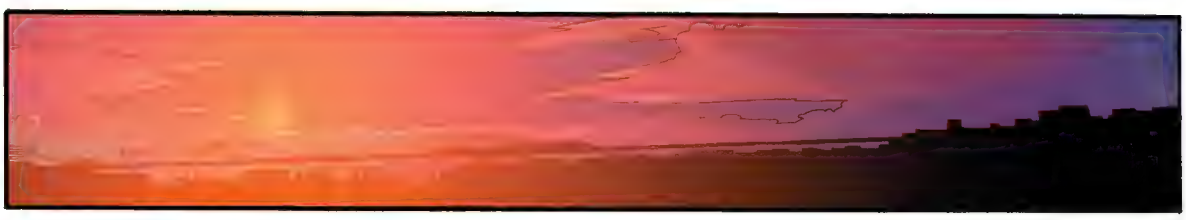
PLEASE HELP ME!
THERE YA GO.
KILL ME OR GRAB THE GUARD.
LET ME SAVE MY BOY.
I'LL TURN MYSELF IN ONCE I DO.
I WILL.
T-THANK YOU--
YES, THANK YOU.
PLEASE STILL DELIVER THE LETTER TO MY SON, IN CASE I DON'T MAKE IT.
TRUST ME...

"...YOU'LL FIND IT ILLUMINATING."









Next:

THE SAVAGE SIX!

SYMBIWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

Howdy, guys!

Tom Brennan here at Spider-Sentral! Things are a bit too crazy around the Spider-Office this week, so we'll be getting to your letters next month, in just two short weeks, when you will witness the dawn of the Savage Six! Check out the cover art by Michael Del Mundo!

See ya in a Fortnight!
--Temerarious Tom

Send e-mail to SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM (please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)

ENTER THE SAVAGE SIX!

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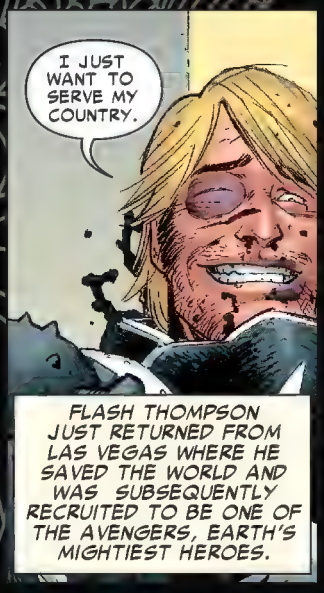
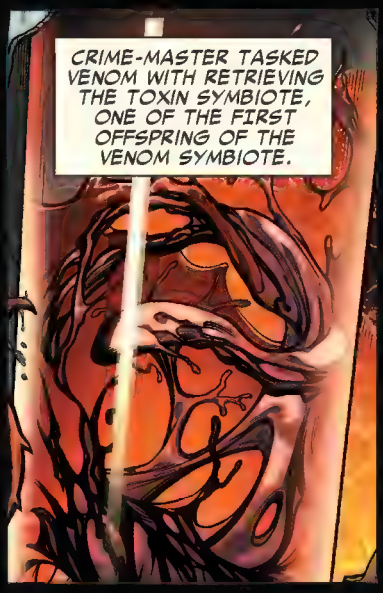
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was agent...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...


I JUST WANT TO SERVE MY COUNTRY.
FLASH THOMPSON JUST RETURNED FROM LAS VEGAS WHERE HE SAVED THE WORLD AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY RECRUITED TO BE ONE OF THE AVENGERS, EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.

VENOM WAS SENT TO VEGAS IN THE FIRST PLACE BY CRIME-MASTER, AN ECCENTRIC SUPER VILLAIN WHO DISCOVERED VENOM'S SECRET IDENTITY AND BLACKMAILED HIM INTO SERVICE.



MEANWHILE, EDDIE BROCK, FORMER HOST OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE, HAS BEEN STALKING AND KILLING SYMBIOTE HOSTS ACROSS NEW YORK IN A DELUDED "HOLY WAR." VENOM IS HIS PRIME TARGET...

SAVAGE SIX: PROLOGUE

RICK REMENDER & CULLEN BUNN
writers

KEV WALKER
pencils

TERRY PALLOT
inks

CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
colors

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

MICHAEL DEL MUNDO
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
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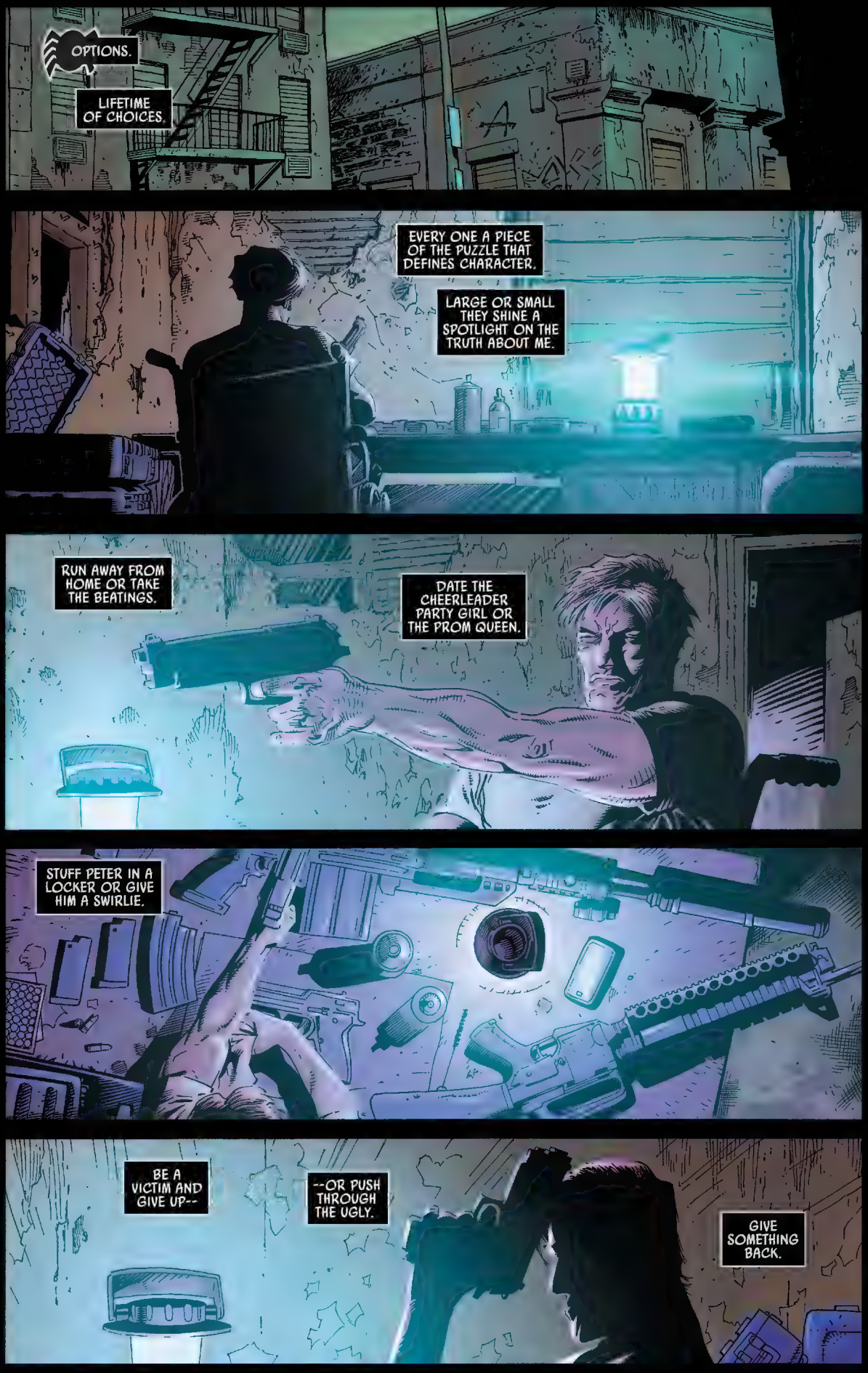
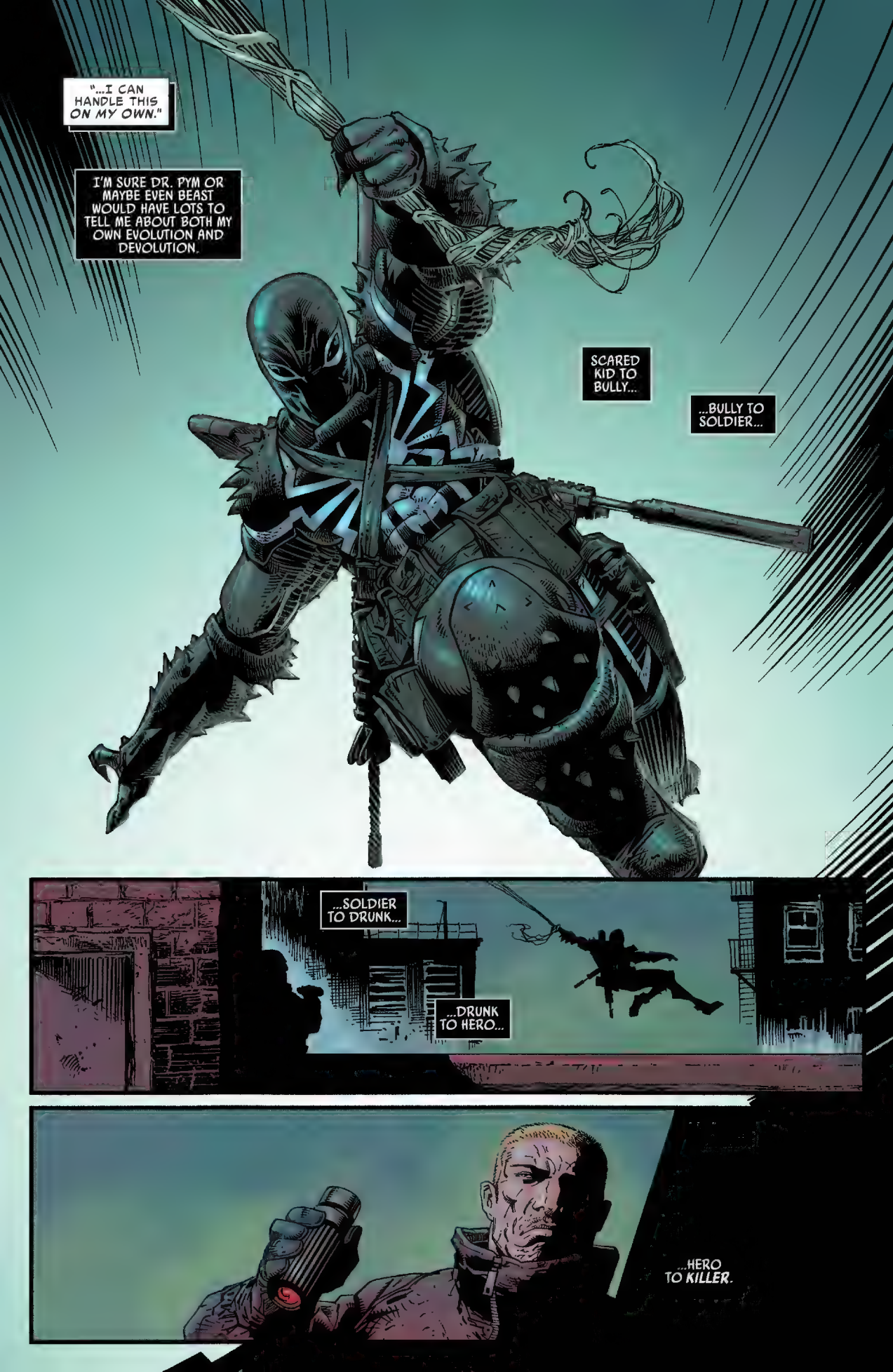

OPTIONS.
LIFETIME OF CHOICES.
EVERY ONE A PIECE OF THE PUZZLE THAT DEFINES CHARACTER.
LARGE OR SMALL THEY SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON THE TRUTH ABOUT ME.
RUN AWAY FROM HOME OR TAKE THE BEATINGS.
DATE THE CHEERLEADER PARTY GIRL OR THE PROM QUEEN.
STUFF PETER IN A LOCKER OR GIVE HIM A SWIRLIE.
BE A VICTIM AND GIVE UP--
--OR PUSH THROUGH THE UGLY.
GIVE SOMETHING BACK.

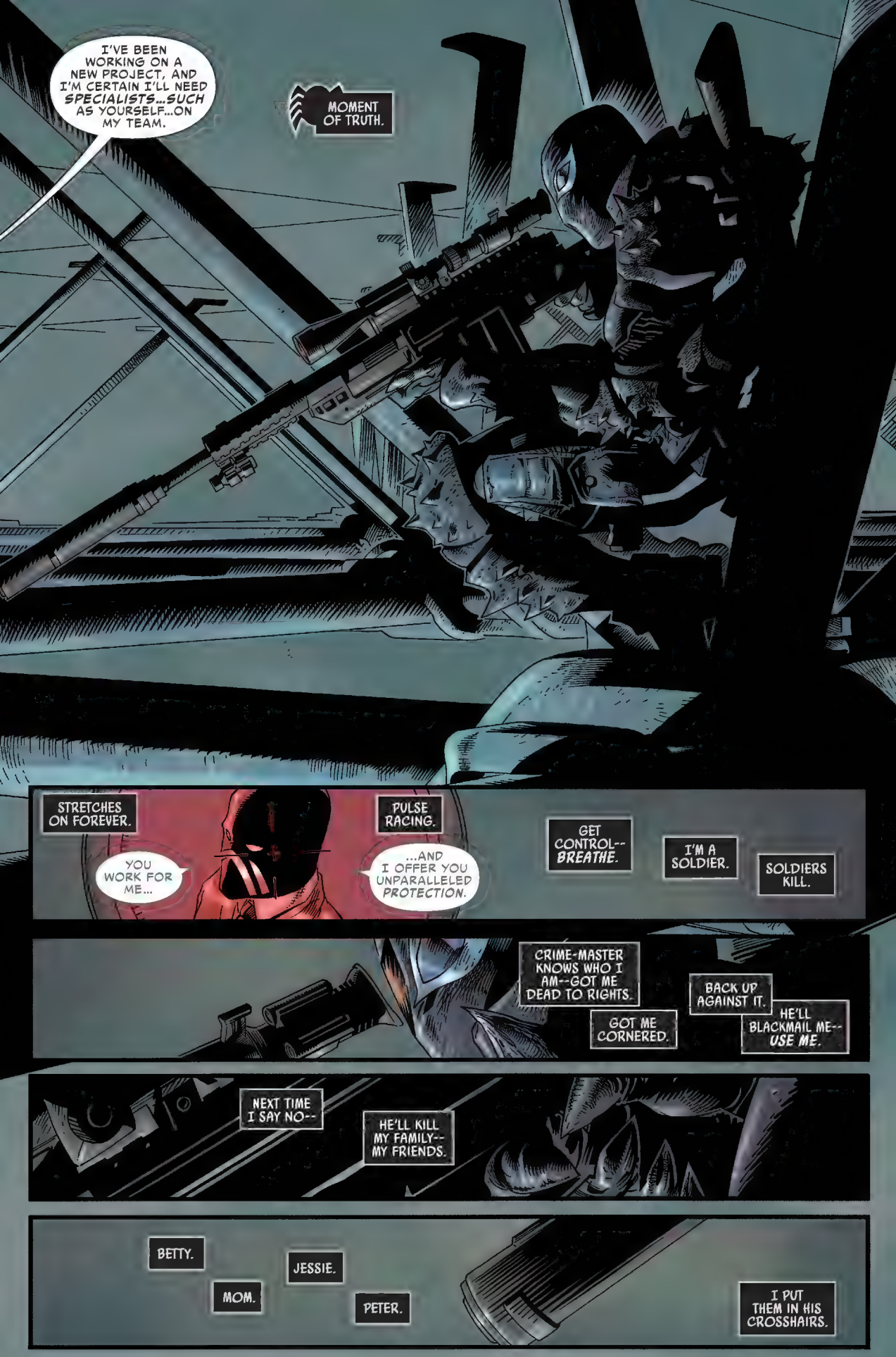
STAY WITH BETTY.
OR BREAK CLEAN AND SPARE HER SOME HEARTACHE DOWN THE LINE.
BETTY.
I USED TO HAVE OPTIONS.
BUT ALL THAT'S CHANGED.
FIGHT AS HARD AS I CAN.
BUT THERE'S ALWAYS A TRAIL OF WRECKAGE BEHIND ME.
AND NOW... NOW I'M AN AVENGER.
THIS COULD END THAT.
THIS COULD COST ME EVERYTHING.
PYM
BUT NO OTHER OPTION SOLVES THE PROBLEM.

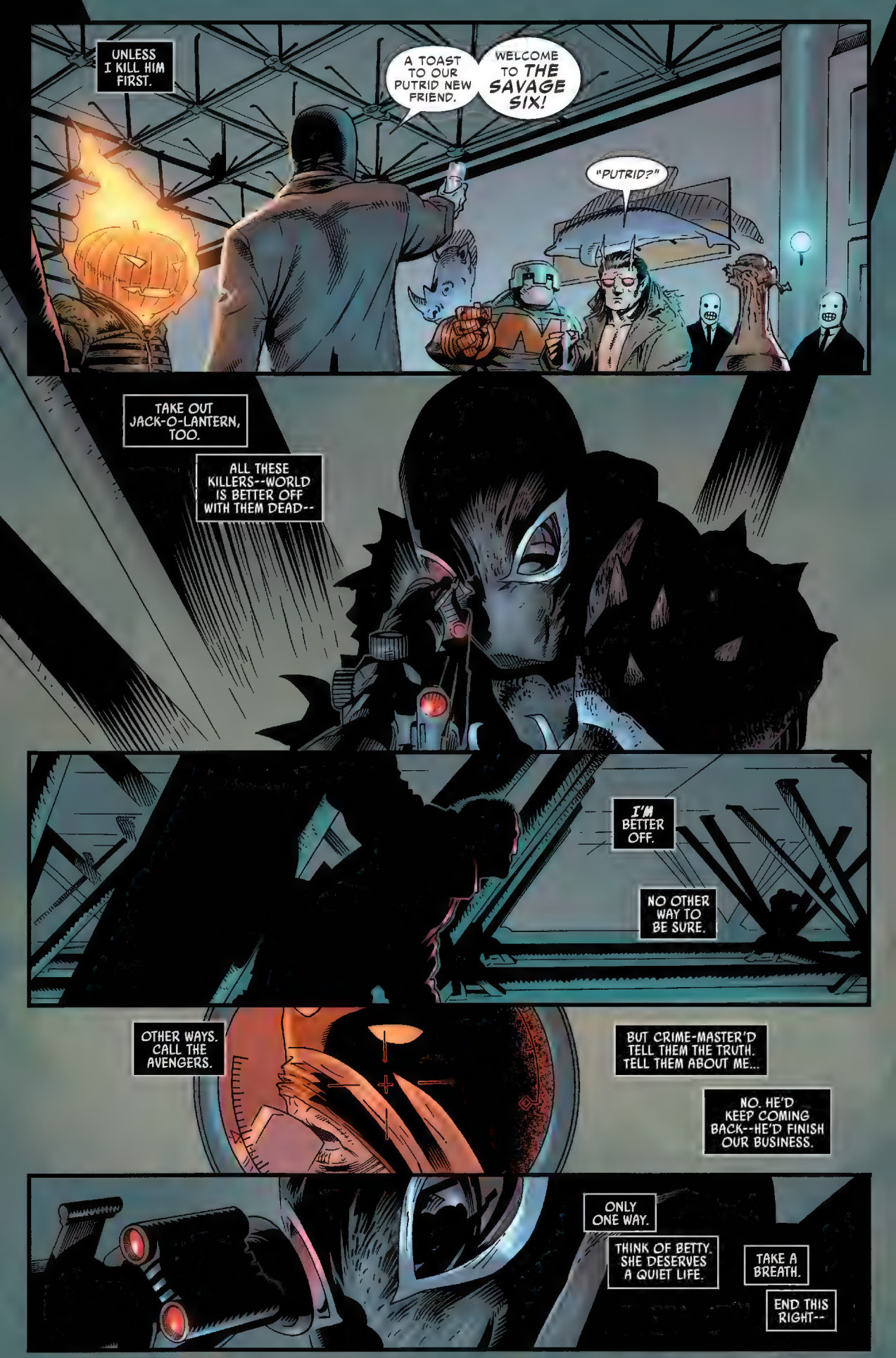
ONE HARD RESOLUTION.
THEN, AFTER THIS, FROM HERE ON OUT, I'M THE GOOD GUY...
...AFTER THIS ONE LAST HIT.
PYM HERE.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, FLASH?
THE SUIT... THE...UH... SYMBIOTE.
I NEED IT.
EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT DOWN THERE?
COPS ARE CHASING A LOCAL THUG.
I THOUGHT I'D LEND A HAND IN ENDING IT PEACEFULLY.
SUIT'S ON THE WAY.
THOMPSON... YOU SURE YOU DON'T NEED ANY HELP WITH THIS?
NO...


"...I CAN HANDLE THIS ON MY OWN."
I'M SURE DR. PYM OR MAYBE EVEN BEAST WOULD HAVE LOTS TO TELL ME ABOUT BOTH MY OWN EVOLUTION AND DEVOLUTION.
SCARED KID TO BULLY...
...BULLY TO SOLDIER...
...SOLDIER TO DRUNK...
...DRUNK TO HERO...
...HERO TO KILLER.

"CRIME-MASTER.
"HE'S HERE, SIR."
DON'T JUST STAND THERE.
SEND THAT GLORIOUS FIEND IN.
CAUGHT A WHIFF ON HIS WAY IN, DADDY-O-- STI-NKY.
YEAH, SORRY 'BOUT THAT. AIN'T HAD TIME TO BATHE SINCE THE LAST VAGRANT I ATE.
WE WOULD EXPECT NO LESS OF THE HUMAN FLY.
I'M SO VERY GLAD YOU DECIDED TO JOIN US. HAVE A SEAT.
A SEAT? HA! NO. I HEARD ABOUT YOU. A REAL NUT. A KOOK.
PROBABLY GOT A PIT FILLED WITH SHARKS OR SOMETHING UNDER THE RUG.
GONNA JUST KEEP ABUZZIN' IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU.

PARANOID LIKE A DRUG ADDICT.
THE PIT'S FILLED WITH IRRADIATED BROWN RECLUSE SPIDERS, BY THE WAY.
AND SPEAKING OF RUGS, I'D APPRECIATE IF YOU AVOID DROOLING ON IT. IT'S GENUINE BABY SEAL.
WHERE ARE MY MANNERS?
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MY FRIENDS.
I BELIEVE YOU ALREADY KNOW MEGATAK AND DEATH ADDER FROM YOUR TIME WITH THE HOOD'S CREW.
AND MY RIGHT-HAND MAN, JACK.
JUST YOU CALL ME JACK, BOSS MAN.
HE CAN USE THE WHOLE O'LANTERN.
RIIIIGHT.
SO.
GOOD.
NICE TIMES. GOOD MEETINGS.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MUST BE NICE TO BE WANTED.
WANTED BY THE AUTHORITIES. WANTED BY THE KINGPIN.
BUSY LITTLE FLY.
A MAN WHO MIGHT WANT SOME FRIENDS.
SO THIS IS A FRIEND PARTY? HUG-BATHS, RAINBOW PONIES, BUTTERSCOTCH WATERFALLS?
CUT THE GIBBERISH, KOOK.
FINE. CUTTING.
NOW, I'M A BUSINESSMAN, MR. DEACON, AND I RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF A LITTLE QUID PRO QUO.


I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A NEW PROJECT, AND I'M CERTAIN I'LL NEED *SPECIALISTS...SUCH* AS YOURSELF...ON MY TEAM.
MOMENT OF TRUTH.
STRETCHES ON FOREVER.
YOU WORK FOR ME...
PULSE RACING.
...AND I OFFER YOU UNPARALLELED *PROTECTION.*
GET CONTROL-- *BREATHE.*
I'M A SOLDIER.
SOLDIERS KILL.
CRIME-MASTER KNOWS WHO I AM--GOT ME DEAD TO RIGHTS.
GOT ME CORNERED.
BACK UP AGAINST IT.
HE'LL BLACKMAIL ME-- *USE ME.*
NEXT TIME I SAY NO--
HE'LL KILL MY FAMILY-- MY FRIENDS.
BETTY.
MOM.
JESSIE.
PETER.
I PUT THEM IN HIS CROSSHAIRS.


UNLESS I KILL HIM FIRST.
A TOAST TO OUR PUTRID NEW FRIEND.
WELCOME TO THE SAVAGE SIX!
"PUTRID?"
TAKE OUT JACK-O-LANTERN, TOO.
ALL THESE KILLERS--WORLD IS BETTER OFF WITH THEM DEAD--
I'M BETTER OFF.
NO OTHER WAY TO BE SURE.
OTHER WAYS. CALL THE AVENGERS.
BUT CRIME-MASTER'D TELL THEM THE TRUTH. TELL THEM ABOUT ME...
NO. HE'D KEEP COMING BACK--HE'D FINISH OUR BUSINESS.
ONLY ONE WAY.
THINK OF BETTY. SHE DESERVES A QUIET LIFE.
TAKE A BREATH.
END THIS RIGHT--

HHN!
ZEEEEEEEEEEEEE
B-BLAM!
BLAM!
GET DOWN!
PNNG!
SNKG!
BROCK!
LOOK AT YOU. BLOODTHIRSTY KILLER.
JUST LIKE I TOLD YOU, RIGHT?
THAT SYMBIOTE MUST BE ANNIHILATED!
THE WORLD MUST BE CLEANSED OF ITS BLIGHT.
BLAM!
BLAM!
SONIC BULLETS--
SCEEEEEEE
SCEEEEEEE
PYM'S MEDICINE IS KEEPING THE SYMBIOTE DOCILE-- BUT IT REACTS.
ARRGH!

SITUATION DETERIORATING--
--OUT OF CONTROL--
--MOVE-- CLEAN IT UP.
THWIP!
IF YOU LET HIM GET AWAY--
--HE'LL NEVER STOP UNTIL--
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR YOU, BROCK!
THWIPP!
GAA-- YOU CAN'T STOP ME, BOY. I'M THE HAND OF GOD!
I'LL KILL YOU BO--
TWONG!
EDDIE'S DOWN.
END THIS NOW--
--HAIL MARY SHOT--
BLAP BLAP BLAP BLAP BLAP BLAP

PNG
SNKK
SNNG
PNGK
PLKK
YOU FACE THE POWER OF ACTUALIZED PROGRAMMING.
THE BINARY LANGUAGE OF THE COSMOS COLLECTED, MADE REAL.
REAL LIFE TETRIS...
SOME SORT OF SHIELD--HAVE TO GET CLOSER--
NEVER GET ANOTHER CHANCE.
GO--
--SNAP HIS DAMNED NECK--
--KILL THEM ALL.
WHEN YOU TOLD ME YOU'D HIRED A LIVING COMPUTER PROGRAM, I THOUGHT YOU'D BEEN EATING MY BLOTTER BUTTER-SCOTCHES, BUT THAT STUPID-LOOKING NUT'S PRETTY HANDY.
GOOD.
SHUT UP.
FLY!!!
KILL WHATEVER STUPID SON OF A BITCH IS SHOOTING AT ME AND YOU'LL HAVE ALL THE PEOPLE YOU CAN GOBBLE!
GO-- EARN YOUR MEAT!
FINE.
BUT NO MORE STINK JOKES.

EUGENE! BUDDY! I KNEW IT!

I KNEW YOU JUST COULDN'T LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE!

YOU KNOW WHAT I GOTTA DO TO BETTY NOW, RIGHT?

YOU PIECE OF--

DOOOM

BLAM BLAM BLAM

WE WUV MURDER!

WE PWARTY IN BWUDD!

WE EAT BWAINS-- GAA!

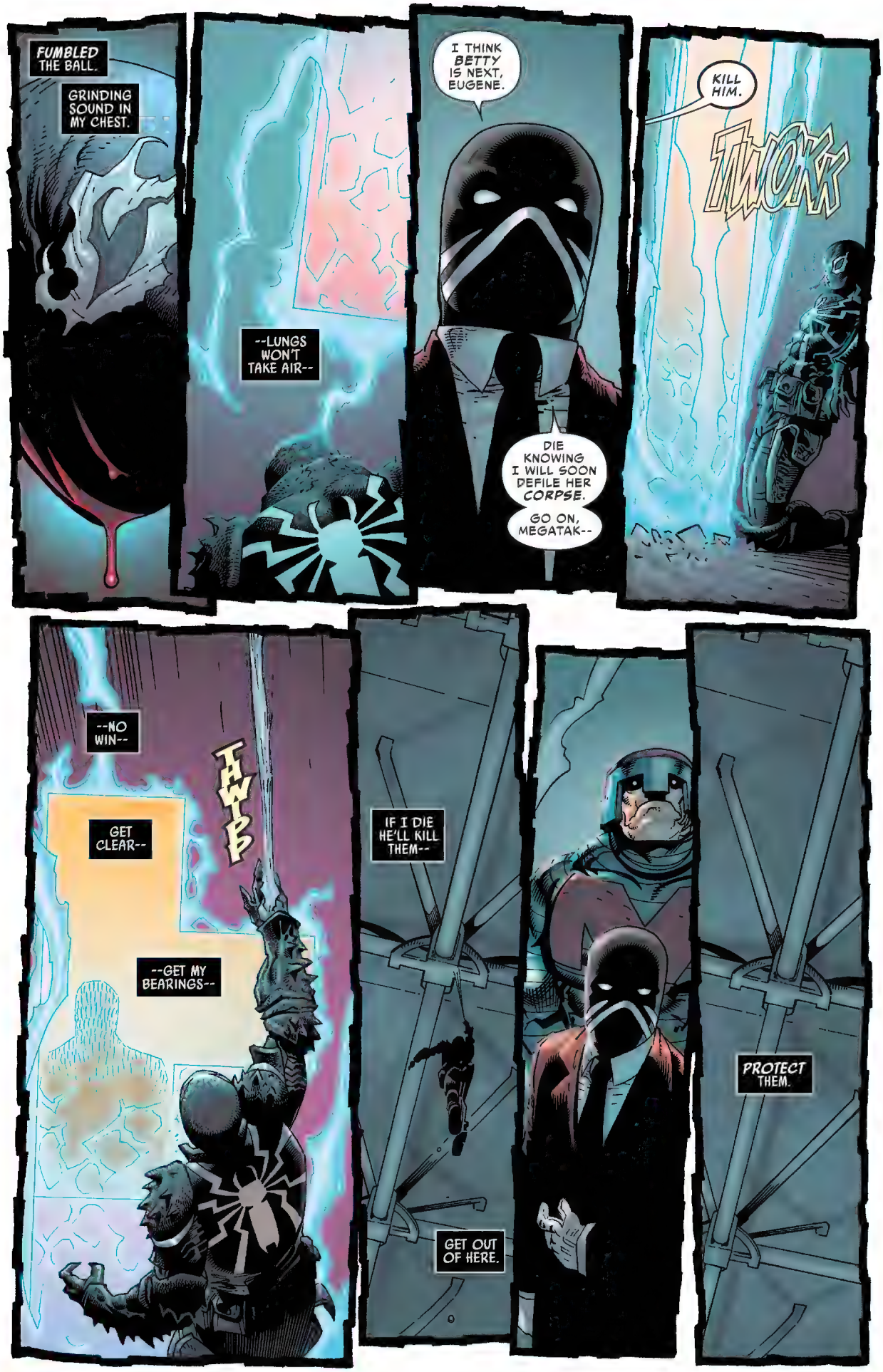
LOOK WHO IT IS!

THE CHUMP WHO BROKE ME OUTTA JAIL TO SAVE A SON I AIN'T GOT!*

LAST ISSUE. --SOME INTERN.

SO FAST--
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE--
YEEAAAGH!
THWIPP
DID THIS-- BROKE TRUCE... R-RED IS A... IT'S NOW A BIRD.
IT'S HERE NOW... NO...THAT'S NONSENSE...
WE WERE GONNA LEAVE YOU ALONE, EUGENE.
WE REALLY WERE. YOU BROKE THE TRUCE.
SHRDD
--DON'T LISTEN--
DON'T THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU FAIL--
RHAA--!
POISON. FREAK'S CLAWS ARE POISONED.
GLORF!
FOCUS... THERE IS NO BIRD...
DIZZY.

WELL, HELLO, MR. THOMPSON.
OOF--!
THWUDD
Y-YOU WANT TO KILL ME-- DO IT.
JUST YOU...YOU AND ME...LEAVE EVERYONE ELSE OUT.
LITTLE LATE TO REOPEN NEGOTIATIONS, DON'T YOU THINK, SPORT?
BUT I'M NOTHING IF NOT REASONABLE.
MAYBE I'LL ONLY KILL YOUR MOM IN QUEENS.
KEEP TALKING.
KEEP RUNNING YOUR DAMNED MOUTH--
SO I CAN PUT A BULLET IN IT--
KA-WHOOM
HNNF!


FUMBLED THE BALL.
GRINDING SOUND IN MY CHEST.
--LUNGS WON'T TAKE AIR--
I THINK BETTY IS NEXT, EUGENE.
DIE KNOWING I WILL SOON DEFILE HER CORPSE.
GO ON, MEGATAK--
KILL HIM.
TWOK
--NO WIN--
GET CLEAR--
--GET MY BEARINGS--
THWP
IF I DIE HE'LL KILL THEM--
GET OUT OF HERE.
PROTECT THEM.

"WELL, HE'S GONE."
UP AN' SLIPPED AWAY, BOSS. TWO GUESSES WHERE HE WENT.
WE LUV TO BWIND HIS EYES.
BUT MAN, YOU SHOULD SEE WHAT HE FORGOT.
OH, EUGENE. YOU JUST EXCRETE BAD LUCK.
GOOD NEWS-- TONIGHT'S NOT A TOTAL BUST AFTER ALL.
CUT HIM DOWN.
DEATH ADDER, WOULD YOU BE A DEAR AND PREPARE LAB NUMBER 5?
FUN-FUN-FUN.

WAKEY, WAKEY, BROCK.
W-WHERE?
W-WHAT IS T-THIS?
RELAX, EDWARD. AIN'T THAT KIND O' PARTY.
YOU KNOW, WHEN I FIRST ENCOUNTERED OUR MUTUAL FRIEND, AGENT VENOM, I SAW RIGHT THOUGH HIS SUPER HEROICS.
AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT I SAW?
I SAW PROFIT.
I IMMEDIATELY SET OUT TO FIND AND MONETIZE ONE OF THESE ALIEN SYMBIOTES.
AFTER ALL...CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS...TERROR CELLS...MILITARY CONTRACTORS... WILL ALL PAY THROUGH THE NOSE FOR SUCH A WEAPON.
OF COURSE, THANKS TO YOUR GENOCIDAL CRUSADE, PICKINGS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT SLIM.
HGGGGGGGG
BUT OUR SEARCH HAS NOT BEEN WITHOUT RESULTS.
AND NOW THAT WE HAVE OUR SYMBIOTE, WE ONLY NEED ONE THING.
BIOHAZARD

A HOST...
N-NO!
NEEEAAAAAGGHH!
PLEASE, GOD!
NOT AGAIN!
NOT--
RRRRAAA AAA!
SO, EDDIE... HOW DO YOU FEEL?
WHAT WOULD YOU AND YOUR NEW FRIEND MOST LIKE TO DO?

KILL--
--VENOM!
Next:
THE SAVAGE SIX!
KEV + TERRY

SYMBIWROTE

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EXEC. PRODUCER

HOLY CATS, WHAT AN OPENING!

A scant few months ago, Rick Remender came to us with a simple concept: six of Venom's new enemies united to destroy not only Flash Thompson – but his entire life. Well, we're off to a deadly start!

Right off the bat, we wanna thank Kev Walker (THUNDERBOLTS) for tying up the Human Fly's story and setting off our Savage Six story on the right foot! You can catch Kev monthly over on THUNDERBOLTS, written by Mr. Jeff Parker and tag-team drawn by Declan Shalvey (and with the handsomest editor in comics, to boot!)

We also wanna welcome now Eisner-Nominated writer Cullen Bunn to Venom who's teamed with Rick Remender on this 5-part, Six-Foe'd, Infinite-Tensioned Titanic Tale! Cullen wanted to say a few words to you, the Venom fans. Take it away, Cullen!

You know those kids who take their favorite action figures, tape firecrackers to them, and blow them to sweet, sweet oblivion? I sometimes get the feeling that Rick Remender was one of those kids. He's spent all this time working with Venom, building him up as a terrific character, and now he's gonna put the poor guy through pure Hell…and I'm gonna help him do it.

One of the things I like most about what Rick's done with this book is how he's really built Flash Thompson up as an everyman hero. He's a super hero, sure, but he makes just as many bonehead mistakes as each and every one of us. Of course, because he is a hero, he doesn't have as much wiggle room as the rest of us. And now he's gonna pay…in spades… at the hands of the Savage Six.

This arc is gonna be one helluva ride. If you thought this issue's shock ending was big, wait 'til next issue. Crime-Master on a rampage. Eddie Brock re-symbiotified with Toxin. The Savage Six out for blood. Agent Venom down and out and on the run. I giggle with childlike glee and delight because I get to be a part of this. To Rick and the gang, thanks for having me!
~Cullen Bunn

Thanks for the kind words, CB! Now a word from one of our most loyal fans!

Dear Venom Web-Heads,

Both Amazing Spider-Man and Venom have been doing incredibly well. I like that Venom is branching out and joining the Secret Avengers - but I wish Flash would make his life a little bit easier, and just tell Betty what he's been up to. Super Heroes deal with secret identities - why not have a secret "someone who knows my identity"? It would mean blabbing top secrets - but I think Flash threw out the soldier handbook the minute he stole Captain America's motorcycle and high tailed it to Vegas.

Keep up the good work!

Erik Hollender
Revere MA

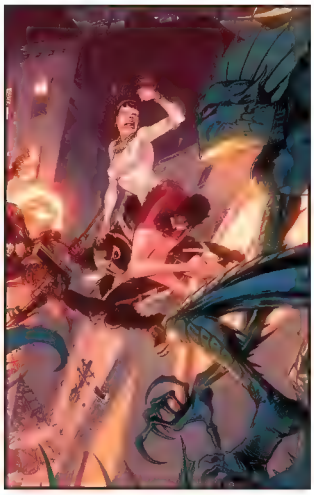
Thanks for the good words, Erik! If we've learned one thing from Spider-Man, Daredevil and all of the other great Marvel heroes, it's that one person knowing your secret identity – even if it's someone you love and trust the most – is one person too many. Still, you'll be surprised at the lengths Flash Thompson will go to protect Betty Brant – and next issue, he'll make a bold decision that will change their relationship forever!

One last bit of business, we were very fortunate to have this issue's interior artist, Kev Walker, contribute a variant cover to this issue. Check it out!

All right, I gotta get-get-going, the next part of this epic goes to print in but two weeks! The relentless pace of the Savage Six amps up as Venom and Betty Brant take a stand on the streets of NYC. And a guy named Parker may stop by as well…

Seeya in 14,
TEMERARIOUS TOM

NEXT!



TWO TO TANGLE!

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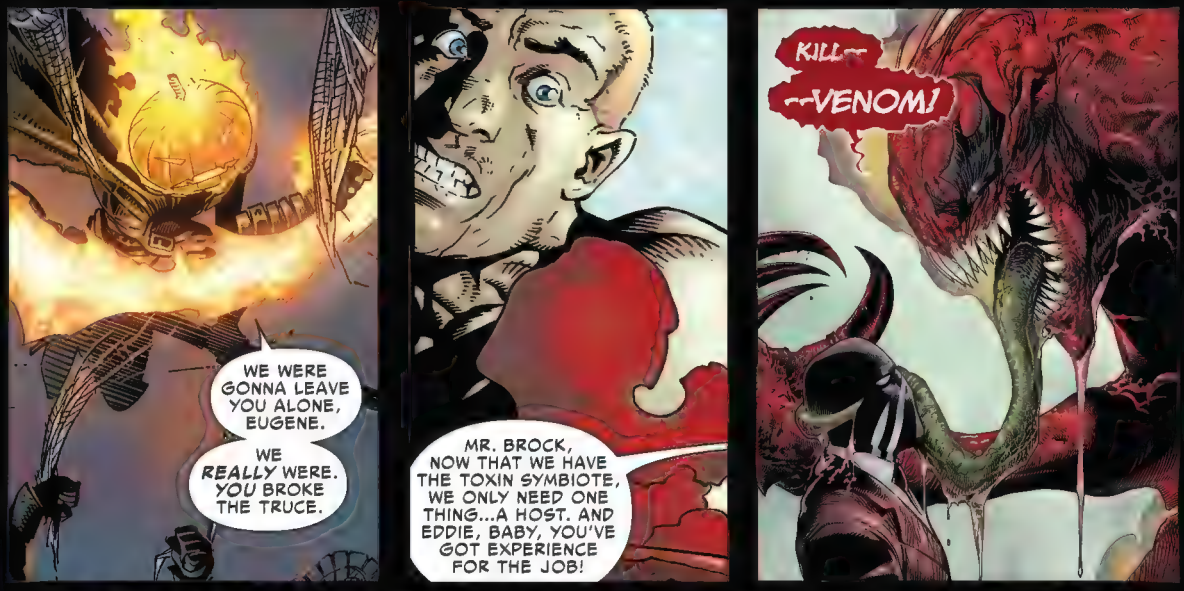
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was Agent...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

CRIME-MASTER KNOWS MY SECRET IDENTITY. MY FRIENDS, FAMILY AND LOVED ONES ARE AT RISK.
BETTY...
FLASH, THE MAN YOU ARE ISN'T ENOUGH FOR ME.
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A NEW PROJECT, AND I'M CERTAIN I'LL NEED SPECIALISTS...SUCH AS YOURSELF...ON MY TEAM.


WE WERE GONNA LEAVE YOU ALONE, EUGENE.
WE REALLY WERE. YOU BROKE THE TRUCE.
MR. BROCK, NOW THAT WE HAVE THE TOXIN SYMBIOTE, WE ONLY NEED ONE THING...A HOST. AND EDDIE, BABY, YOU'VE GOT EXPERIENCE FOR THE JOB!
KILL--
--VENOM!

SAVAGE SIX, PART 1: PUBLIC ENEMIES

RICK REMENDER & CULLEN BUNN	LAN MEDINA	NELSON DECASTRO	CHRIS SOTOMAYOR	VC's CLAYTON COWLES	TONY MOORE & JOHN RAUCH
writers	pencils	inks	colors	letters	cover art
TOM BRENNAN	STEPHEN WACKER	AXEL ALONSO	JOE QUESADA	DAN BUCKLEY	ALAN FINE
editor	senior editor	editor in chief	chief creative officer	publisher	exec. producer

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NO SIGN OF A STRUGGLE.
THEY HAVEN'T BEEN HERE.
BUT NEITHER HAS BETTY.
C'MON--PICK UP--
PLEASE, GOD--
HEY! THIS IS BETTY. LEAVE A MESSAGE AT THE BEEP.
PICK UP THE DAMNED PHONE!
FIND HER.
BEFORE THEY DO.
BEFORE THEY KILL HER.
HEY! THIS IS BETTY. LEAVE A--
UNLESS THEY'VE ALREADY FOUND HER.
DAMMIT!
UNLESS SHE'S ALREADY DEAD.
BECAUSE OF ME. BECAUSE OF--
SMACK
COFFEE WITH PETER EMPIRE JAVA 7:00 AM

EMPIRE JAVA
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, PETE?
IT'S FLASH. AGAIN.
HE'S CALLED A DOZEN TIMES THIS MORNING.
WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER, I'D BE LUCKY TO GET A CALL.
APPARENTLY IF I WANTED HIM TO STAY IN TOUCH, ALL I HAD TO DO WAS BREAK THINGS OFF.
URMMM
MAYBE IF YOU TWO SAT DOWN AND...UGH. NEVER MIND.
YOU KNOW AS WELL AS ANYONE I'M THE LAST PERSON WHO SHOULD BE GIVING ROMANTIC ADVICE, BETTY.
HONESTY, FROM THE MOUTH OF A MAN? SHOCKING STUFF THERE, PARKER.
OKAY, BUT, DON'T LET THIS MAKE YOU BITTER.
YEAH, I KNOW. IT'S JUST--I'M SO DAMNED TIRED OF BEING LIED TO BY THE MEN IN MY LIFE.
WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME THAT ATTRACTS THESE LOSERS?
DON'T DO THAT.
NONE OF THIS IS YOUR FAULT.
FAULT OR NOT--IT'S TRUE.
MY OWN BROTHER, BENNETT, GOT HIMSELF KILLED BECAUSE OF GAMBLING DEBTS.
NED AND I DIDN'T GET ALONG DURING THE GOOD TIMES... AND THE GOOD TIMES DIDN'T LAST LONG.
AND FLASH...
GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT FLASH IS INVOLVED WITH.

HAS HE...
HAS FLASH OFFERED ANY KIND OF EXPLANATION?
VRMMM
NOT ONE THAT MAKES SENSE.
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST GO AHEAD AND ASK THE SON OF A--
MAYBE.
PROBABLY.
BUT YOU SHOULD WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE A LITTLE LESS ANGRY.
GOD, PETER.
I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL EVER STOP BEING ANGRY WITH HIM FOR THIS.
GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN.
FLASH HAS BEEN THROUGH A LOT LATELY.
I KNOW... AND I STILL DON'T HATE HIM ANY LESS.
I GUESS THAT'S HOW I KNOW IT'S REALLY OVER.
LOOK...I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF LEAVING YOU HERE BY YOURSELF, BUT--
I KNOW. IT'S A WORKDAY.
I NEED TO GET TO WORK ON MY NEW ARTICLE AS WELL.
THINK I MIGHT SIT HERE FOR A BIT, CAFFEINATE UP THE ENERGY.
THANKS FOR COMING, PETE.

YOU NEED ANYTHING--YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.
WILL DO.
URMMM
Flash
NOT NOW, FLASH.
NOT NOW.

I'LL HAVE A SMALL AMERICANA, PLEASE.
30¢
50¢
$1.00
THAT'LL BE $4.25, MA'AM.
THANKS, JUST A SECOND...
TELL YOU WHAT, MISS BRANT--
THIS ONE'S ON ME.
OH!
UM...
THANK YOU...?
JACK.
PEOPLE TEND TO REMEMBER ME BY MY FACE.

YOU'RE FLASH'S FRIEND... FROM...
THAT'S RIGHT. ARMY BUDDIES.*
THESE DAYS, HE'S MY SPONSOR.
*BETTY MET "JACK" IN VENOM #10--TOM
HOW'VE YOU BEEN?
IT'S KIND OF YOU TO ASK.
BIT OF A ROUGH PATCH RECENTLY.
BENDER IN VEGAS. HURT SOME PEOPLE.
Y'KNOW... LET THEM DOWN.
I COULD HAVE USED A FEW ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FLASH, Y'KNOW, BUT HE'S BEEN A LITTLE HARD TO TRACK DOWN.
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
ACTUALLY, I WONDER IF WE MIGHT GO SOMEWHERE A LITTLE MORE PRIVATE...TO TALK.
IT'S ABOUT FLASH.
I'M NOT SURE I'M--
IT'S IMPORTANT, BETTY.
OW!
YOU'RE HURTING--

SMASH
DEAR GOD--
HE'S ALREADY FOUND HER.
WELL, POOPS.
HE TOUCHED HER.
OH, NO! IT'S THE TERRIBLE SUPER VILLAIN VENOM!
V-VENOM?
PUT HIS HANDS ON BETTY--
THIS WOMAN'S LIFE IS IN DANGER!

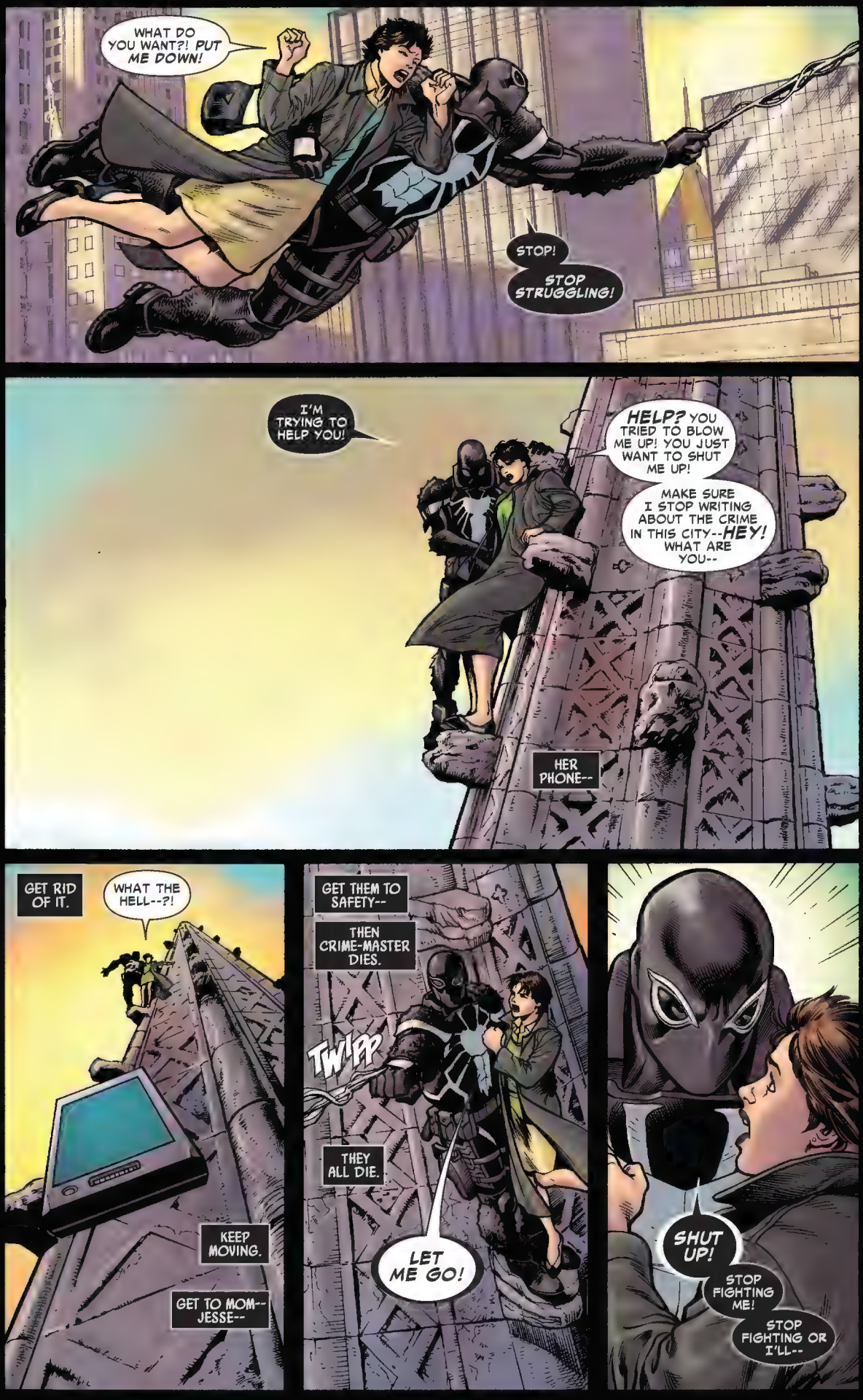
KREESH
YRGH!
LAST MISTAKE OF YOUR LIFE, YOU ROTTEN PIECE OF--
LEAVE HIM ALONE!
TWOKK
BETTY'S VOICE-- SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND.
AFRAID OF ME.
THINKS I'M A KILLER.
SHE'S RIGHT.
SURE AS HELL GONNA KILL--
I SAID--
GET OFF HIM!
REEEEEEEEEEEEE
AAGGH!
SONIC PEPPER SPRAY.
SHE'S BEEN EXPECTING TO ENCOUNTER VENOM AGAIN--
SOMEONE GAVE HER THIS TO DEFEND HERSELF--
--AGAINST ME.

THING'S GOT PARKER'S SCIENCE GEEK FINGERPRINTS ALL OVER IT.
AHH!
PLEASE-- NO--!
GET OUT OF HERE!
RUN!
LETTING HER GO--A MISTAKE.
CRIME-MASTER WILL SEND THE OTHERS.
SHE'LL GET KILLED BY HERSELF.
GO--
PROTECT HER.
--SNAP HIS NECK FIRST.
YOUR GIRLFRIEND TRIED TO SAVE MY LIFE. SHE'S SWEET ON ME.
GONNA GIVE HER A DEEP KISS WHEN THIS IS ALL OVER.
PLENTY O' TONGUE.

HOW'D YOU FIND HER?!
KWOKK
GOT NEW FRIENDS NOW, EUGENE.
OUR OPERATION'S EXPANDING.
TWAMM
MEET MEGATAK.
UNNGH!
LOOKS LIKE A VIDEO GAME FROM THE '80s COME TO LIFE, RIGHT?
IT'S BECAUSE HE IS. HE'S A LIVING BOSS-LEVEL BADDIE.
KOOK'S GOT A REAL AFFINITY FOR ELECTRONICS.
COMPUTERS... VIDEO GAMES... CELL PHONES.

JACK'S HAVING FUN.
COCKY.
NOW... WHERE WERE WE?
OH, YEAH... MEGATAK'S GOING TO GO FIND BETTY AND--
HNNF!
THWIPP
THINKS IT'S A DONE DEAL.
THINKS HE CAN AFFORD TO TOY WITH ME.
WHICH MEANS HE WAS READY FOR ALL OF THIS.
PREMEDITATED.
GET OUT OF HERE--FIND BETTY.
DON'T LEAVE HER SIDE.
CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.
THE AVENGERS. MAKE THE CALL--

SHK-KWAAM
OOF-!
GHA-!
MEGATAK...JAMMED SIGNAL...
TURNING EVERY CELL PHONE INTO A LAND MINE.
WHUMPP
PSYCHOPATH IS TOYING WITH ME...
TOYING WITH BETTY...
...ALREADY A DOZEN STEPS AHEAD.
EXCUSE ME-- LOOK OUT-- PLEASE--
MOVE!
OH, GOD--
LET GO OF ME!
OKAY--NOW TO FIND JESSE AND MOM--
PRAY TO GOD I'M IN TIME.


WHAT DO YOU WANT?! PUT ME DOWN!
STOP!
STOP STRUGGLING!
I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU!
HELP? YOU TRIED TO BLOW ME UP! YOU JUST WANT TO SHUT ME UP!
MAKE SURE I STOP WRITING ABOUT THE CRIME IN THIS CITY--HEY! WHAT ARE YOU--
HER PHONE--
GET RID OF IT.
WHAT THE HELL--?!
KEEP MOVING.
GET TO MOM--JESSE--
GET THEM TO SAFETY--
THEN CRIME-MASTER DIES.
TWIPP
THEY ALL DIE.
LET ME GO!
SHUT UP!
STOP FIGHTING ME!
STOP FIGHTING OR I'LL--

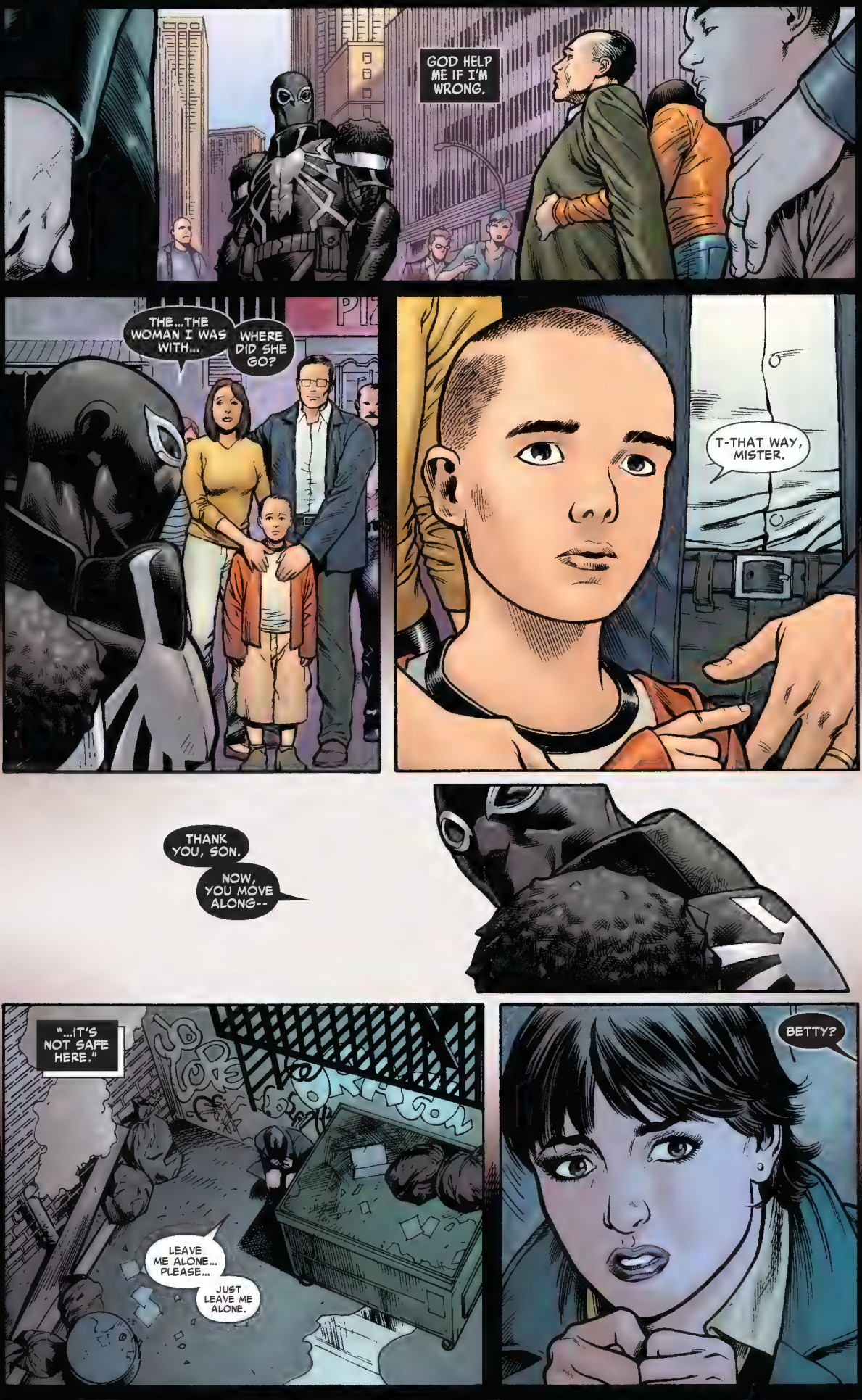
GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF.
I'M SORRY--YOU JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME.
I KNOW THAT'S CRAZY. I KNOW.
JUST TRUST ME.
CALM DOWN.
GET IT TOGETHER, DAMMIT.
YOU'RE SCARING HER.
YOU'RE NOT THINKING STRAIGHT.
STARTING TO SOUND LIKE--
VENOM!
AIEEEE-!
TENDRILS-- RAZOR SHARP--
TWIST HARD-- BREAK HER FREE--

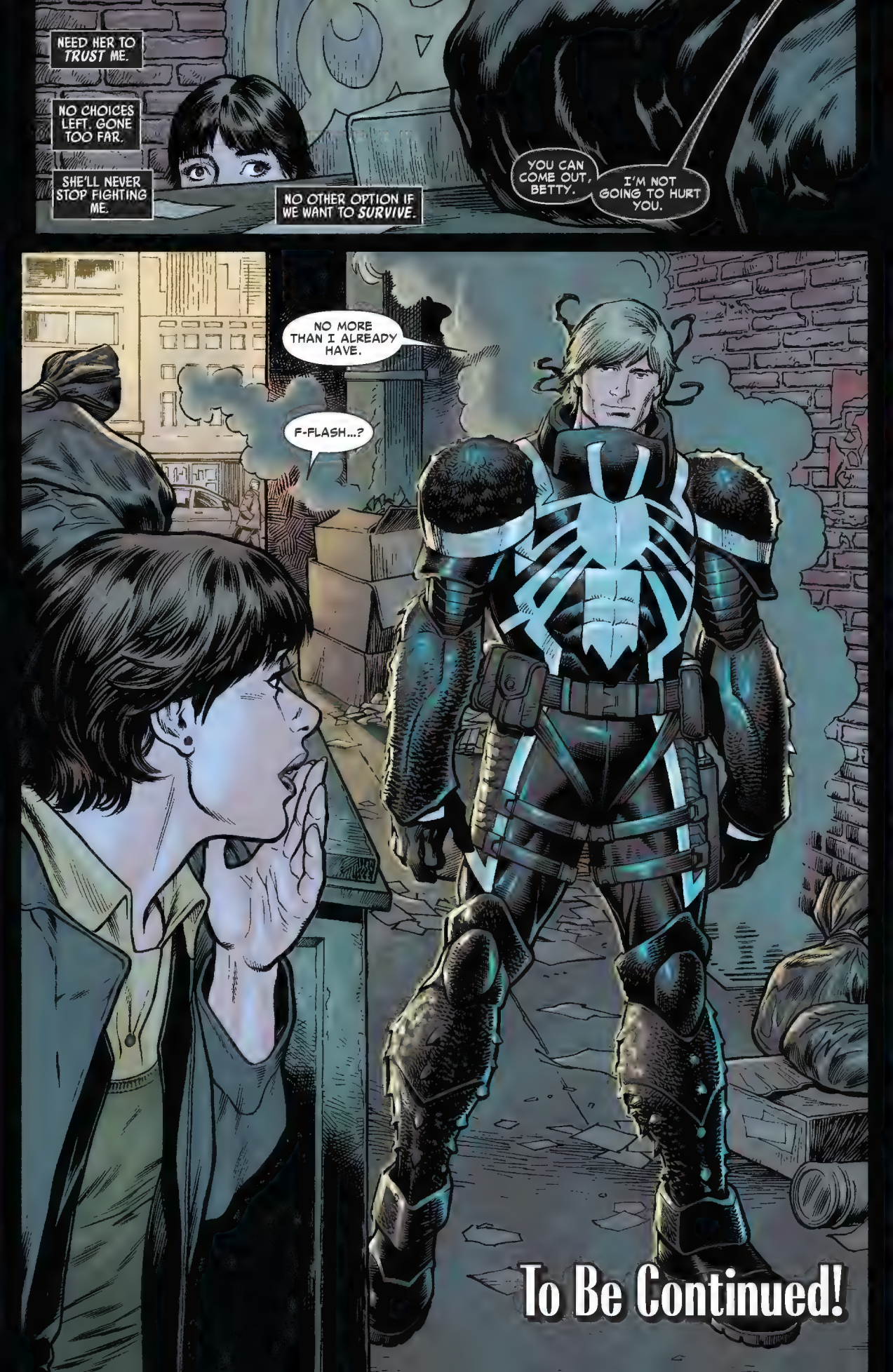
AAAAAAAAHHH!
NO!
TOO FAST--
--DIDN'T EXPECT--
RELAX YOUR BODY!
SHE DOES.
SHE'S A TROUPER.
FIGHTS HER FEAR.
STRONGEST WOMAN I'VE EVER KNOWN.
SHE'S HAD TO BE.
ENDLESS TRIALS, ENDLESS MISFORTUNE...
...THE THING I SWORE I'D NEVER BE TO HER.
WHATEVER THAT WAS--IT'LL BE HERE SOON--
RUN!
ALL OF YOU! GET THE HELL OUT OF--
WE'VE COME FOR YOU, GRANDFATHER--

WE'VE COME FOR YOUR SOUL.
THE TOXIN SYMBIOTE--
BONDED TO SOMEONE NEW--
KROOOOOM
--SOMEONE WITH A GRUDGE.
ACK!
SCHOKK
NOT JUST SOMEONE--
YOU BETRAYED US!
TRIED TO BUTCHER US!
BUT WE ARE WHOLE AGAIN--
THAT VOICE... EDDIE.
EDDIE BROCK.
READY FOR YOU.
SKAM

WHAT? WHERE ARE YOUR TEETH, GRANDFATHER? I SMELL THE DRUGS IN YOU...
YOU LET HIM NEUTER YOU.
EDDIE... WAIT...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU...MY FAULT... BUT...
YOU... THIS ISN'T YOU ANYMORE...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'S US.
AND WE WILL BE THE ONLY ONE LEFT FOR THE SPAWNING.
DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS--
BUT I DON'T HAVE TIME TO DEAL WITH IT NOW.
YEEAAAARRRGGH!
REEEEEEEEEEE

THE SONIC CHARGE IS SPENT.
EDDIE... TOXIN...STILL WEAK...
PUT A BULLET IN HIS HEAD.
PUT AN END TO THIS DELUSIONAL PSYCHO.
N-NO...
NOT HIS FAULT.
IT'S MINE.
WRAP HIM UP.
THWIPP
GET BETTY. GET OUT OF HERE--
TOXIN WANTS TO HURT ME... MY FAMILY...
...NOT THESE PEOPLE.
THIS WON'T HOLD HIM LONG!
GET OUT OF HERE--CALL 911, TELL THEM WHAT YOU SAW!


GOD HELP ME IF I'M WRONG.
THE...THE WOMAN I WAS WITH...
WHERE DID SHE GO?
T-THAT WAY, MISTER.
THANK YOU, SON.
NOW, YOU MOVE ALONG--
"...IT'S NOT SAFE HERE."
LEAVE ME ALONE... PLEASE...
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
BETTY?


NEED HER TO TRUST ME.
NO CHOICES LEFT. GONE TOO FAR.
SHE'LL NEVER STOP FIGHTING ME.
NO OTHER OPTION IF WE WANT TO SURVIVE.
YOU CAN COME OUT, BETTY.
I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU.
NO MORE THAN I ALREADY HAVE.
F-FLASH...?
To Be Continued!

MARVEL

19

SAVAGE SIX PART 2

VENOM®

REMENDER
BUNN
MEDINA
DECASTRO

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Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was Agent...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

SAVAGE SIX, PART 2: FAMILY

RICK REMENDER & CULLEN BUNN
writers

LAN MEDINA
pencils

NELSON DECASTRO
inks

CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
colors

VC's CLAYTON COWLES
letters

TONY MOORE & EDGAR DELGADO
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

MADE THE ONLY PLAY I COULD.

NO TIME TO SECOND-GUESS MYSELF NOW.

BETTY'S AFRAID...AFRAID OF *VENOM*.

I NEED HER TO TRUST ME.

F-FLASH?

NOW THAT SHE KNOWS WHO I AM, MAYBE SHE'LL *UNDERSTAND*--

SMACK

YOU BASTARD!

BETTY, I--

ALL THIS TIME, YOU'VE BEEN LEADING THIS...

THIS... DOUBLE LIFE.

THIS LIE.

I'M SORRY, BETTY.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE TIME RIGHT NOW.

YOU'RE IN DANGER--

BECAUSE OF ME.

--AND IF YOU DON'T STAY WITH ME, THOSE PEOPLE... THEY'RE GOING TO KILL YOU.

NO...

BETTY... THEY'RE GOING AFTER MY MOM... MY SISTER...

I'VE GOT TO STOP THEM.

DAMN YOU, FLASH THOMPSON.

JESSIE'S PLACE IS CLOSER.

BUT I NEED TO CALL MY MOM. WARN HER.

THEY *HACKED* OUR PHONES.

TRYING TO CUT US OFF.

HEY!

THWIP

I...

I DON'T *REMEMBER* HER NUMBER--

I KNOW IT.

D-RIING
D-RING

HMMM?

D-RING

I WONDER WHO *THAT* COULD BE?

D-RING

PLEASE...

TELL YOU WHAT, MOMMY DEAREST...

WHY DON'T WE JUST LET THAT GO STRAIGHT TO VOICEMAIL?

YOU AND ME ARE GONNA BE PLENTY *BUSY.*

D-RIIIIING

SHE'S NOT ANSWERING.

MAYBE SHE'S OUT.

GOD, I HOPE.

CAN YOU TRY JESSE?

I'LL HAVE TO USE DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE.

MAYBE--

ESCAPE IS IMPOSSIBLE.

YOUR SCENT LINGERS ON THE DATA STRINGS.

MEGATAK! DAMN! TOSS IT!

THEY MUST BE MONITORING THE LINES.

FLASH...

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO--

--SURVIVE.

THAT'S IT. LIE TO HER.

KEEP HER CALM.

THIS IS JESSE'S APARTMENT. I NEED YOU TO STAY OUT HERE. LET ME CHECK IT OUT.

YOU HEAR *ANYTHING*, YOU RUN. DOWN THE FIRE ESCAPE.

CRIME-MASTER'S REALLY NAILED ME TO A WALL HERE.

I CAN'T EVEN REACH OUT TO THE AVENGERS.

IF THIS IS THE END FOR ME-- FINE.

FLASH...

BUT I'M *NOT* GOING TO LET THEM TAKE MY FAMILY.

STAY. HERE.

OKAY... OKAY.

...THANK YOU.

PLEASE.

JESSIE DOESN'T DESERVE TO ANSWER FOR WHAT I'VE DONE.

PLEASE, GOD...

NO...

THUMP

JESSIE'S HUSBAND.

JACK O'LANTERN MUST'VE COME STRAIGHT HERE WHILE I WAS DEALING WITH TOXIN...

WHILE I WAS WITH BETTY...

THE LANTERN MADE SHORT WORK OF HIM.

HEAD SPINNING.

MY FAULT.

IF I HAD COME HERE FIRST...

W-WHO'S THERE?

JESSIE...

WHO IS THAT?

SHE'S ALIVE!

I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT SHE MANAGED TO--

N-NO.

SHE *COULDN'T* HAVE GOTTEN THROUGH THIS *UNSCATHED*.

JACK WOULD'VE DONE *SOMETHING* TO HER.

DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS.

FLASH? IS THAT YOU?

HOW DID SHE--

HIYA, FLASH!

YOUR SISTER SURE LIKED TO PLAY WOUGH!

WE WUV TO SWAWWOW HER SOUL!

WE WUV TO CARVE OUT WUVER-BOY'S BWAINS!

JESSE'S VOICE.

JACK'S LITTLE DEVIL DOLLS.

MIMICKING MY SISTER'S VOICE.

MESSING WITH MY HEAD.

PLAYING *GAMES* WITH ME.

I'M DONE PLAYING GAMES!

SMASH

NO FAIR! NO FFFF--

SSCCCRRRREEEE!

CR-CHOCK

YOU'RE NOT PLAYING VEWY NICELY.

WE BWEAK YOUR SISTER'S BOY TOY AND YOU BWEAK US!

WE'RE TAKING OUR TOYS AND GOING HOME!

AND YOU CAN GO STRAIGHT TO *HELL!*

BEEP

BETTY!

BEEP

BOOOOOM

FLASH...

WHERE'S JESSE?

THEY GOT TO HER.

MY GUESS IS SHE'S--

SMOKE TRAIL.

JACK O'LANTERN. HE RETURNED TO WATCH THE SHOW.

HE'S NOT GOING TO GET AWAY.

WAIT HERE.

CAN'T TAKE CHANCES WITH THIS SONOFABITCH.

KILL SHOT.

AS SOON AS I GET HIM IN MY SIGHTS...

NO HESITATION THIS TIME.

JESSIE!

SHE'S ALIVE!

THERE'S STILL A CHANCE...

BOO!

YEEAAGGHH!

LOOK AT US, EUGENE.

BOTH OF US HAVE *HOT DATES*... AND WE LEAVE THEM ON ROOFTOPS SO WE CAN *DANCE* WITH EACH OTHER.

THIS MUST BE *TRUE LOVE*, HUH?

BUT DON'T WORRY.

ONCE I'M DONE WITH YOU, I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF 'EM.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT A LITTLE GIRL-GIRL-HOMICIDAL MANIAC ACTION *ALWAYS* CHEERS ME UP.

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO ME, JACK DOESN'T WALK AWAY FROM THIS.

HE'LL NEVER TOUCH MY SISTER...

NEVER TOUCH BETTY...

BLAM BLAM BLAM

HRRRK!

BLAM

OH, EUGENE. YOU'RE ALL FIRED UP, AREN'T YOU?

WE CAN'T LET GIRLS COME BETWEEN US LIKE THIS.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO BROS BEFORE--

SHUT UP!

BLAM BLAM

FWOOOOSH

AIN'T OVER 'TIL *DADDY* SAYS IT'S OVER.

YEAAGH!

HRRR... HHRR...

BUT YOUR SISTER, ON THE OTHER HAND.

OH, HER GOOSE IS OFFICIALLY COOKED.

UNNNF!

CAN BARELY SEE...

EYES BURNING...

DOESN'T MATTER...

HAVE TO SAVE--

I REMEMBER THIS STORY ABOUT HOW OL' WEB-HEAD COULDN'T SAVE SOME PRETTY GIRL FROM A TERRIBLE FALL.

IF THE REAL DEAL *COULDN'T* SAVE SOME SKIRT...

...HOW COULD YOU?

JESSIE!

JESS?

JESSIE?!

I... OH...

BRAVO, AGENT VENOM. BRAVO. YOU SAVED THE GIRL!

BUT I WONDER IF YOU CAN MANAGE A *REPEAT PERFORMANCE.*

HELP!

FLASH!

FLAAAAAAAASH--

CAN'T LEAVE JESSIE.

OOOOH. TOUGH BREAK, HUH?

I'VE GOTTA BE GOING NOW.

BULLET HOLES TO PATCH. GIRLS TO *SLAUGHTER.*

JUST ONE LAST QUESTION BEFORE I GO.

"HAVE YOU VISITED MOM RECENTLY?"

To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

I don't know about you folks, but I barely survived this issue – I'm terrified and anxious for the fate of the family Thompson. Rick and Cullen are putting our man Flash through utter hell – will he come out the other side of it? What price will he pay? Can he be the hero he was born to be? The comic world is abuzz with these questions and excitement for our man Venom. And a lot of buzz over the news that Mr. Rick Remender will be leaving our symbiotic shores with Cullen Bunn stepping in to take over as full writer of the book. I've said this a few times but it bears repeating – no one anticipated the hit this book would become, and that success is due to Rick Remender. But as you guys and gals are finding, Cullen Bunn is a force of writing to be reckoned with and we couldn't be happier to have him join us full time. But enough of my gabbing -- let's get to your letters!

Symbiwrote,

If "THE SAVAGE SIX" keeps pace with its first chapter, Rick Remender is going out on a high note. Lots of tension, action, subtle character developments and not so subtle revelations. I especially like how Flash takes responsibility for what's happened to Eddie. He's becoming quite the hero even under incredible pressure. And I love where you're going with Flash and Betty's relationship. It's funny that he took the high road here and revealed himself when Peter never did. But then, Peter was a teenager at the time and didn't have the kind of motivation that only the Savage Six can bring to the table. Speaking as a longtime fan, this really feels like the culmination of years' worth of interpersonal relationships in Peter Parker's world. The only way this gets better is if the Crime Master is really Ned Leeds...

Best,
David Walton

Interesting guess, David. Interesting guess indeed...

Dear Symbiwrote,

I'm having an absolute blast with VENOM. Remender's control for dialogue is pulse pounding and spot on tight in all the right places. I've gotta say I miss Tony Moore's art, I always enjoyed how the colors and shading gave so much effect for creepier characters like Jack O'Lantern and the Human Fly. That said, this comic has been a real pleasure, especially considering I never liked Venom when he was first released (admittedly I gave #1 a shot after catching up with UNCANNY X-FORCE). I hope that VENOM #17 and #18 turn out just as fantastic, I'm really looking forward to seeing more of the Human Fly.

Before I go, I've gotta ask -- The CIRCLE OF FOUR story was a great arc and one of my personal favorites, but with such a huge rotation of artists and writers, how hard was it to map out a script that managed to fit all the characters and personas together? Will the Venom team accept another chance to do a mash-up, cross-event like CIRCLE OF FOUR?

All the best
Ramon Cruz

Glad to have you on board the V-Train, Ramon. CIRCLE OF FOUR was one heck of a feat – it featured not only a huge team of creators but also a team of editors as each character had their home-team batting for their particular issues. But we always have a blast working together. If you're interested in seeing more cross-over fun – well, this fall, things get small with MINIMUM CARNAGE, featuring—ah, heck, Marketing just gave me the stink eye. More on that next month...

Dear Marvel Team,

VENOM #18 was the best story line in that comic for a while. While I enjoy Rick Remender's work and even have a Venom signed by the gentleman, I must say that Cullen Bunn, one of your new writers, does an excellent job and they make a good team.

My first experience with Cullen Bunn was the hardcover SPIDER-MAN SEASON ONE and I thought it was great. Mr. Bunn is definitely a keeper and I hope he stays on the VENOM team for a long time. That was a great reveal on the last page of VENOM #18. I can't wait to find out what happens next.

Marc D. Goldfinger
Belmont MA

Thanks, Marc! Cullen and Rick are working their butts off to give THE SAVAGE SIX a sense of urgency and immediacy that has long defined the Mighty Marvel tradition. We know the high expectations of the discerning comic fan. We're out to hit those expectations everytime.

Dear Venom Group,

You printed my letter, suggesting that Flash Thompson finally reveal his Venom identity to Betty Brant - and you said that like Spider-Man, Daredevil, and other super heroes - even letting one person know your secret identity can be one person too many. Now I get issue #18 - and here's Flash revealing himself to Betty! Good job - Flash was putting her through way too much grief, without any explanations. I hope this gets them back together.

Erik Hollender
Revere MA

Thought you'd be excited about that, Erik. But don't paint too rosy a picture of their future just yet – let's be honest, things didn't work out so well for Betty this issue. The drama of secret identities plays a huge part in our story's finale. So hold on tight.

Dear Rick,

First, I wanted to say thank you for all that you have done with your run on VENOM! I have loved every minute of it, and I haven't had a complaint yet. You took a great character that was really in need of a writer just like you, and made it your own. The finished product has been spectacular, and is one of the few books I buy every time it comes out, without fail.

That being said please don't leave! Not to say that Cullen Bunn is not a fine writer, but I want more Remender VENOM. I feel that you have a grasp on the character that will be hard to measure up to. Why are you leaving? Please at least tell me you have something else coming soon from you and Marvel!

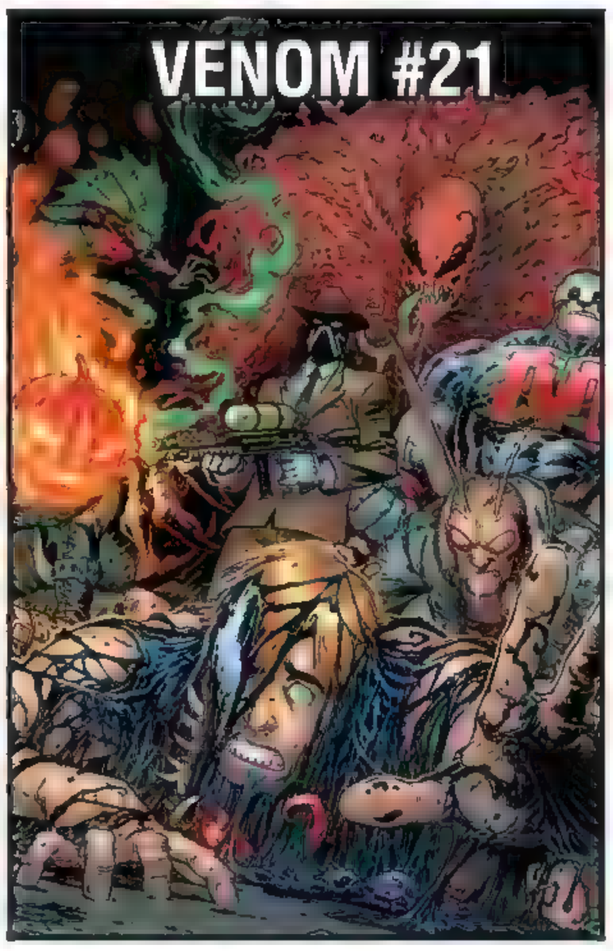
Chrys

Thanks, Chrys. We're all sad to see Rick go, but fear not – America's going to be hearing some BIG news about where he'll be heading next soon.

That's all for this month – next month, we're facing down the pulse-pounding conclusion of THE SAVAGE SIX arc with issues #20 and #21 – it's going to be 40 pages of spine-tingling, death-defying chaos, horror and heroism the likes of which has never been seen! Be there or be GONE!

--Temerarious Tom

NEXT!



THE SAVAGE SIX STRIKE BACK!

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MARVEL

20

24 YEARS OF VENOM

SAVAGE SIX PART 3

VENOM®

REMENDER • BUNN • MEDINA • ATKINS

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Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was Agent...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

SOME THINGS IN LIFE ARE BLACK AND WHITE.
WHEN I TOLD MY EX-GIRLFRIEND, BETTY BRANT, THAT I WAS REALLY VENOM, A "SUPER HERO"...SHE WAS ANGRY.
AND IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT I TOLD HER TO PROTECT HER--SHE WAS RIGHT TO BE ANGRY. BECAUSE I LIED TO HER.
BECAUSE I HURT HER.

A LUNATIC NAMED THE CRIME-MASTER IS LEADING A GROUP OF MONSTERS TO KILL ME. THEY'VE KIDNAPPED BETTY
THEY'RE GOING TO KILL MY FAMILY. THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME. BECAUSE I LIED.

SAVAGE SIX, PART 3: THE TRUTH

CULLEN BUNN & RICK REMENDER
writers

LAN MEDINA & ROBERT ATKINS
pencils

NELSON DECASTRO & RICK KETCHAM
inks

CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
colors

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

MICHAEL DEL MUNDO
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Queens.

IT'S A TRAP.

JACK WOULDN'T KILL MOM OR BETTY.

NOT LIKE THIS.

NO--HE'D WANT ME TO WATCH.

SENDING ME HERE--PART OF SOME GAME.

JUST A TRAP--PART OF A BIGGER PLAN.

WHY ELSE GRAB BETTY? WHY NOT KILL HER?

I WAS RIGHT THERE.

AND JESSE--JESSE WAS A DISTRACTION. BETTY WAS THE PRIZE.

MENTIONED MOM TO THROW ME OFF THE SCENT--

SIDETRACK ME.

HE WOULDN'T KILL HER.

ONE OF THE OTHERS WOULD.

HUMAN FLY. DEATH ADDER.

THEY'D KILL YOUR MOTHER.

WOULD NOT THINK TWICE.

AND IF THEY DID--IF YOU FIND HER DEAD--

IT'S ALL ON YOU.

GONE.

BUT THEY'RE *BOTH* GONE. MOM MAY BE ALIVE.

STILL PLAYING THE GAME.

THANK *GOD*.

ACIDIC VOMIT.

THE HUMAN FLY.

KILL HIM. KILL THAT SON OF A--

YERAGH--!

SPRAAAT!

DEATH ADDER. LEFT HIM HERE--

LEFT HIM TO TAKE HIS SHOT--

GOOD.

SOMEONE TO PAY FOR THIS.

DAMMIT-- POISON IN THOSE CLAWS--

ALREADY COURSING... THROUGH... BANANA TIME.

LIKE THE OLDIES.

SHOULD'VE PAID THE ELECTRIC BILL.

CIRCUS WON'T BE BACK IN TIME...

ATTENTION!

PAY... ATTENTION!

POISON-- WORKS FAST.

DIZZY--

--LIGHTS LIKE THE CIRCUS--

FIGHTING BLIND--NO AIM--

NEVER HIT HIM WITH *ONE* OF THESE--

SO HIT HIM WITH A *DOZEN*.

SWING 'EM *FAST*-- BLIND--

--EVERY DIRECTION--

WHEN THEY *STOP*--MEANS THEY'VE *STUCK*.

--BASTARD'S STILL SILENT-- DOESN'T MAKE A SOUND--

BUT I CAN FEEL HIM SCREAMING--

SMASH!

--AND HE'S JUST *BEGUN*.

TWONK

HKK!

CHOKING ME.

SYMBIOTE INSTINCTIVELY THICKENS AROUND THE NECK.

ITS INSTINCT? OR *MINE*?

WHAT *THE HELL* IS GOING ON IN HERE?

DIDN'T I ALREADY TELL YOU ABOUT THE *DAMNED* NOISE--

OH... GOD!

CALL 9-1-1! CALL 9-1-1!

HOLY--

POISON-- HE'S ALL TRACERS AND BLUR--

FASTER THAN I CAN TRACK. NO WAY TO LOCK IN--

SKRAK

GHRA--!

GET YOUR HEAD TOGETHER-- FIGURE IT OUT--

YOU DIE HERE--SO DOES MOM.

SO DOES BETTY.

HEART POUNDING--

--POISON SPREADS--

OH--OH, GOD--!

--SO MANY SOUNDS--

FLY'S ACID PUKE-- STINKS--

THE CIRCUS IS ALWAYS HERE--

ALWAYS FUN--NEVER SAD--

STINKS--

WAKE UP!

YHERAGHH!

FSSHSSSSHKSSSSHH

NO--OH, NO--

NO!

THWIP!

MONSTERS.

THEY TEAR DOWN THE WORLD--

SPAWN

--HURT PEOPLE--

--SPREAD HORROR--

NO REASON TO LIVE--

HUNCH

NO REASON TO SUFFER HIM--

DON'T WORRY, LADY.

PLEASE... DON'T HURT US.

HE WON'T.

DESERVES TO DIE--

PULL ON THE SPINE--

ONE HARD JOLT.

DO IT--

HE WON'T STOP UNTIL SOMEONE IS *DEAD*.

OH MY--!

GO! GET OUT OF HERE!

SHE CAN'T SEE THIS--

GET OUT!

--SHOULDN'T SEE WHAT COMES NEXT--

KR-KRAK!

NO CHOICE.

NOT PRETTY--

WHAT DID YOU DO?

WAAAAAAAA--!

BUT SHE'S ALIVE...

...AND HE ISN'T.

IN HERE! THEY'RE IN *HERE!*

CRAZY-- KILLING EACH OTHER!

YOU...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR DEAL IS--

--BUT JUST GO--

JUST GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE--!

MOM....

IF THE FLY HAS HER--

--THEN I'VE GOT A GOOD IDEA WHERE.

The Abandoned Shipyard.
STATEN ISLAND.
H-HELLO?
HELLO?
ANYONE?
CAN ANYONE TELL ME WHERE THE HELL I AM?
THIS IS HOW I DIE, ISN'T IT?
I'M *DEAD* ALREADY.
NOT QUITE, MS. BRANT. ALTHOUGH THAT IS MOST CERTAINLY A **POSSIBILITY.**

YOUR BEHAVIOR IN THE NEXT FEW MINUTES WILL GUIDE THE HAND OF FATE, SO TO SPEAK.

JUST--STOP THE SNIVELING--DO AS YOU'RE TOLD.

W-WHO ARE YOU?

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?

THE NAME'S CRIME-MASTER.

AS FOR WHAT I WANT... OR MORE SPECIFICALLY WHAT I WANT WITH YOU, BETTY...

...WHY DON'T YOU COME AND ASK ME FACE-TO-FACE.

BZZZ-

CLIK!

LITTLE MEET 'N' GREET.

YOU'LL BE SURPRISED BY HOW MUCH WE HAVE IN COMMON.

I...I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO YOU.

SO TOUGH.

BUT I CAN TELL YOU'RE SWEATING THROUGH YOUR POLYESTER.

AND I ASSURE YOU...

...IF I CLOSE THAT DOOR, IT WILL NOT OPEN AGAIN.

EVER.

Lower East Side.

YEEARRGGHH!

N-NO...NO PLEASE...

C'MON, MAN...

PLEASE?

SKK-GUL-SKKK!

YEEEEEEADAAAAGGRRRRHHHH!

I WANT TO GO HOME.

P-PLEASE. I DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS.

I WANT TO GO *HOME.*

YEEEEEEADAAAAGGRRRRHHHH!

WHERE IS SHE?

THE HUMAN FLY. CREATURE OF HABIT.

ALWAYS BRINGS HIS VICTIMS TO THE SAME PLACE.

GOT HERE BEFORE HE STARTED.

DOESN'T MAKE ME LESS FURIOUS.

GET THE MOM TO SAFETY.

BUT FIRST. THINGS FIRST.

LOOK AT WHAT HE'S DONE TO ME!

LOOK AT WHAT *YOUR* BOY--

YOU SPEAK TO HER AGAIN AND WE'LL SEE HOW WELL YOU FLY WITH ONE WING AND NO EYES.

HEY, WE CAN *DEAL*, ALL RIGHT?

I'LL TELL YOU *EVERYTHING* YOU WANT TO KNOW.

YOU WANNA KNOW WHERE CRIME-MASTER'S AT? *I'LL TELL YOU.*

CLOSE YOUR EYES, MA'AM.

WAIT... WHAT...

I SAID I'LL TALK!

I'LL TALK!

I KNOW.

YEEEEEADAAAAGGRRRRRHHHH!

SHEGGLE

WHAT HAVE YOU... DONE?

DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANTED TO TALK?

SO--

--TALK.

...

MS. BRANT.

THIS WAY, IF YOU WILL.

THE BOSS'LL BE WITH YOU SHORTLY.

OH, GOD.

W-WHAT IS *THIS?*

THAT'S ME AND MY--

QUITE A LITTLE *SHRINE*, ISN'T IT?

CRIME-MASTER?

AN ODE TO BENNET AND HIS LITTLE SIS, *BETTY BRANT.*

TO THE *FAMILY.*

A FAMILY THAT WAS STRIPPED AWAY FROM ME.

BUT DON'T FEEL TOO BADLY--

--CRIME IS MY FAMILY NOW.

BENNETT?

BUT... YOU...

I'M RIGHT HERE.

AND I'M OFFERING YOU A CHANCE.

A CHANCE FOR US TO BE *TOGETHER* AGAIN.

AND FOR OUR FIRST *FAMILY NIGHT?*

WE'RE GONNA NUKE SOME TV DINNERS...

...AND YOU'RE GONNA WATCH ME *MURDER THE HELL* OUT OF *FLASH THOMPSON.*

To Be Concluded!

SYMBIWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

THE SAVAGE SIX TRIUMPHANT?!

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MARVEL

21

24 YEARS OF VENOM

SAVAGE SIX PART 4

VENOM®

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VENOM

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was Agent...

PREVIOUSLY...

NOW CRIME-MASTER HAS BETTY PRISONER...
CRIME-MASTER?
CONSIDER THIS MERRY LITTLE SCHEME A TRIBUTE TO BENNETT BRANT AND HIS LITTLE SIS, BETTY BRANT.
TO THE FAMILY.

SAVAGE SIX, PART 4: BEST LAID PLANS...

CULLEN BUNN & RICK REMENDER
writers

LAN MEDINA
pencils

PALLOT, SOTO & KESEL
inks

CHRIS SOTOMAYOR
colors

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

TONY MOORE & EDGAR DELGADO
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

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exec. producer

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The Abandoned Shipyard.
STATEN ISLAND.

"I KNOW YOU HAVE *QUESTIONS*, SIS. WHO WOULDN'T? THESE ARE INTERESTING TIMES.

"AND I'M EAGER AS PLUM PUDDING TO GIVE YOU SOME *ANSWERS*.

YOU THINK HE'S GONNA SHOW UP?

WHAT AM I, ONE OF THEM MAGIC EIGHT BALLS?

"BUT I NEED YOU TO *UNDERSTAND* SOMETHING.

"THE ANSWERS ALL LEAD TO THE SAME PLACE.

UH... HEY...

WHAT'S WITH THE *SILENCER?* WHAT, YOU FIGURE YOU MIGHT NEED TO DO THIS WORK QUIET LIKE?

"THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY THIS IS ALL GONNA END.

SIGNS POINT TO "*YES.*"

HEY! WAI--

PUM! PUM! PUM! PUM!

"THIS ENDS *BLOODY.*

"SO...NOW THAT WE'VE GOT THAT OUT OF THE WAY..."

LET'S HAVE ONE OF THOSE BROTHER AND SISTER HEART-TO-HEARTS I HEAR SO MUCH ABOUT ON THE LIFETIME CHANNEL.

I DON'T... I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

YOU WERE SHOT DOWN.

Y-YOU *DIED*, BENNETT!

IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #11.

YEAH.

THAT WAS A REAL BAD TIME IN MY LIFE, A REAL LOW POINT.

AHH!

THAT BULLET RIPPING ME UP STUNG *ALMOST* AS BAD AS KNOWING MY SISTER THOUGHT I WAS NOTHING BUT A LOW-LIFE, GUTTER-TRASH GAMBLER!

I MISSED THE FUNERAL BUT I'VE GOT TO KNOW... DID YOU MANAGE TO SQUIRT OUT A FEW TEARS FOR YOUR DEAR, DEPARTED BROTHER?

BENNETT... I...

IT'S ALL RIGHT. REALLY, IT IS.

I CAN'T BLAME YOU FOR THINKING I WOULDN'T AMOUNT TO MUCH.

BUT I'VE *CHANGED*. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME THAT YOU KNOW THAT.

I'VE *BETTERED* MYSELF.

"I'M PART OF SOMETHING *BIGGER* NOW.

"YOU MIGHT SAY I HAD A MOMENT OF CLARITY.

"OF COURSE, SAID EPIPHANY CAME TO ME WHILE I WAS LYING IN A SECRET MORGUE.

"I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG I WAS THERE. I STILL DON'T KNOW *HOW* THEY BROUGHT ME BACK.

"BUT THEY SAVED ME.

"THEY *CHOSE* ME...

"CHOSE ME TO FULFILL A *GREAT DESTINY*...TO CARRY ON A NOBLE TRADITION.

"A CRIME-MASTER FOR *EVERY* GENERATION."

AND NOW LOOK AT ME.

LOOK HOW FAR I'VE COME.

I SHOULD HAVE COME TO YOU BEFORE NOW, BETTY. I REALIZE THAT.

BUT I HAD MY TRAINING... AND I HAD MY WORK...

I NEVER STOPPED THINKING OF YOU, THOUGH. I NEVER STOPPED *YEARNING* FOR THE DAY WE COULD BE REUNITED.

EVEN WHILE WATCHING THAT PATHETIC CRIPPLE FLASH THOMPSON TRY TO TAKE MY PLACE WITH YOU, I--

SIR! HE'S HERE!

SORRY, SIS. WE'LL HAVE TO CATCH UP LATER.

JACKIE BOY, IT'S *GAME TIME.*

CRIME-MASTER'S IN HERE SOMEWHERE...

WAITING FOR ME...

UREET! UREET! UREET!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

SURRENDER YOURSELF TO THE FURY OF NEW REALITY!

THERE IS NO ESCAPING-- HUMANITY IS COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY NEW REALITY!

WAITING FOR ME TO *FINISH* WHAT I STARTED.

THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS IS FINDING *BETTY*.

WHAP!

MEGATAK'S DIGITAL MASS MADE PHYSICAL-- HE'S *UNSTOPPABLE.*

THOOM!

WHHFF!

hhh

HITS HARDER THAN THE HULK.

AND HE'S EVERYWHERE.

NEED ROOM. GET CLEAR-- NEED TO--

NNNGHH!

FLESH IS WEAK. FLESH IS AFRAID.

BUT THE CODE IS CLEAN. THE CODE IS MERCIFUL.

THE CODE IS--

NO. NO MERCY

IT'S NOT YOUR *RIGHT* TO OFFER HIM SUCH KINDNESS.

HE'S MINE!

HRRRRKKK!

0011100011100101

CHOMP!

TOXIN.

WILLING TO RISK HIS HUMAN HOST TO GET TO ME--TO MY SYMBIOTE.

HIS HOST, EDDIE BROCK--*ALMOST* AN INNOCENT.

BONDED WITH TOXIN AGAINST HIS WILL--

NNNNF!

--AFTER FAILING TO KILL ME.

STRONGER THAN ME--

THERE'S NO RUNNING, GRANDFATHER.

FED BY THE RAGE.

IS THAT THE **STINK** OF **YOUR** FEAR I SMELL? OR IS IT THE HUMAN WHO'S PUT YOU ON A LEASH?

CAN'T WIN THIS.

DEAL WITH HIM LATER.

BETTY IS IN DANGER.

PUT HIM DOWN--OUT OF THE WAY--

IT'S ENOUGH FOR NOW.

SO WEAK. RESORTING TO TRICKERY.

WHERE'S THE BEAST THAT TRIED TO SLAUGHTER ME?

GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO KILL.

THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!

COME TO ME! FEED YOUR PROGENY!

GIVE ME YOUR STRENGTH FOR THE SPAWNING!

GRRRAAAA!

WHAT'S THIS?

ANOTHER TRICK?

IT'S CALLED A DECOY, ASSHAT.

DISTRACTED HIM FOR A FEW SECONDS.

ALL I NEED.

REEEAAAAAARRRGGH!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

BUT BROCK DIDN'T *WANT* TO BECOME TOXIN.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM IS MY FAULT.

GRRGGGHHGRG

AND...IF I'M RIGHT...

BROCK AND THE SYMBIOTE HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO COMPLETELY BOND.

STILL A CHANCE TO SAVE THE MAN BEFORE I KILL THE MONSTER.

C'MON... C'MON...

SCLLUUUUKK!

YES! THOMPSON GETS THE TOUCHDOWN.

V-VENOM?

YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, BROCK.

YOU'RE GONNA BE--

EDDIE!

HH--
HHR--
NOOO!

YOU BASTARD!

FLAMES BURNING TOO HOT. CAN'T GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HELP.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!

YEEEAAAGGGGH!

DEAR GOD-- BROCK--

DIDN'T DESERVE THAT.

BUT THE FIRE...TOO STRONG, MY SYMBIOTE WOULD NEVER GET THROUGH

ONLY ONE THING MATTERS NOW--

BETTY.

BENNETT... I'LL DO WHATEVER *YOU* WANT.

BUT...JUST LEAVE FLASH ALONE...DON'T HURT HIM.

PLEASE... BENNETT...

AH AH AH!

IT'S *CRIME-MASTER* WHEN THE MASK IS ON.

AND DO YOU REALLY THINK I'M THAT FOOLISH?

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN CONVINCE ME THAT YOU'RE READY TO BECOME MY DOTING SISTER, THE *CRIME-MISTRESS?*

YOU'D BETRAY ME AT YOUR FIRST POSSIBLE CHANCE.

WE'VE GOTTA LET THAT STOCKHOLM SYNDROME SETTLE IN A BIT FIRST.

BESIDES... EVEN IF I *WANTED* TO LET VENOM LIVE...

EVEN IF HE HADN'T HURT YOU SO TERRIBLY...

...EVEN IF HE HADN'T RUINED SO MANY OF MY PLANS...

...WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'D EXTEND ME THE SAME COURTESY?

HE--

NO, BETTY. HE'S *RIGHT.*

HE'S GOING TO DIE.

EUGENE... I GOTTA DROP SOME TRUTH ON YOU--

I'M BORED OF OUR LITTLE RIVA--

LURRRK!

THAT'S GOOD, JACK.

FWUMPF!

KR-RANG!

THIS IS BETWEEN ME AND YOUR BOSS.

URR... URRR...

I'M...I'M SLIPPING HERE...

SOMEBODY HELP ME!

DADDY! HELP--

-ME

EEEE

POISON'S NOT GOING TO DO MUCH AGAINST--

FSSSSSSH!

RECEIVING

UNNGGGHHAAAHH!

POISON. THAT'S RICH.

THOSE VAPORS PRODUCE AN INTENSE AUDIO EFFECT. *SONIC* GAS.

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE THAT.

THIS ONE'S CLEVER, TOO.

VAPORIZED NAPALM MIST.

BRRRRR-WWWWOOOSH!

RRRRRRRNNNNGGGHHH!

WEAK. SYMBIOTE DYING.

HE'S GOT ME. DEAD TO RIGHTS.

BETTY... PLEASE...

IT'S OVER.

NOW... NOW THAT SYMBIOTE OF YOURS ISN'T OFFERING QUITE SO MUCH PROTECTION...

NOW WE'LL TRY POISON.

BLAM!

D-DAMN, BETTY.

THAT'S SOME COLD...

I WAS MEANT...FOR... SOMETHING SPECIAL...

Y-YOUR BROTHER?

HE'S DEAD, FLASH.

HE DIED A LONG TIME AGO.

BETTY'S SAFE.

MY MOM AND JESSE ARE SAFE.

THE NIGHTMARE'S OVER.

FOR NOW.

BETTY...

I HAD NO IDEA. IF I HAD--

IT WOULDN'T HAVE CHANGED ANYTHING.

HE WAS COMING FOR ME. LIKELY FOUND OUT ABOUT YOU BECAUSE OF ME. NO MATTER WHAT YOU DID...

BENNETT WOULD STILL BE DEAD.

YOU'D ALREADY MADE UP YOUR MIND. AND ONCE YOU SET YOUR MIND ON SOMETHING...

I LOVE YOU...BUT YOU'RE SELFISH.

I NEVER MEANT FOR THINGS TO TURN OUT THIS WAY.

I KNOW YOU DIDN'T, FLASH.

DESPITE WHAT YOU THINK, THIS *ISN'T* YOUR FAULT.

AT LEAST... NOT ALL OF IT.

AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I *FORGIVE* YOU.

BUT I DON'T *EVER* WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

Avengers Lighthouse Station. Later.

AGENT VENOM.

NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US. WE'VE ONLY BEEN CALLING YOU FOR DAYS.

WHERE HAVE YOU--

I'VE HAD A BIG STUMBLE.

IT DIDN'T GO WELL.

TRUTH IS, I'VE BEEN SCREWING UP SINCE I GOT THIS SYMBIOTE.

AND I THINK IT'S TIME I CAME CLEAN.

To Be Continued...

SYMBIWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

VENOM VS. JACK O'LANTERN –
THE FINAL BATTLE!

MARVEL

22

REMENDER
SHALVEY
LOUGHRIDGE

VENOM®

24 YEARS OF VENOM

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Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

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THE NORMAL FAMILY.

FUZZY FEELINGS AND SUNNY MEMORIES.

SOME MARKETING GENIUS DECODED OUR CORE IDEAL AND PLAYED IT ON REPEAT FOR THE PAST SIXTY YEARS.

THERE ISN'T A PLACE IN THAT FANTASY FOR LEADING KILLERS TO YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW.

LEADING MONSTERS TO YOUR MOTHER.

MOM IS MAKING COOKIES IN A SUN-DRENCHED KITCHEN.

DAD COMES HOME FROM WORK IN TIME TO PLAY CATCH AND HEAR ABOUT YOUR DAY.

YOUR SIBLINGS BICKER; BUT IN THE END YOU'RE ALL THERE FOR EACH OTHER.

FINAL DAILY BUGLE

INSIDE

JACK-O'-LANTERN KILLER STRIKES AGAIN

A PAINTING THAT MAKES A *NORMAL* FAMILY LOOK *DYSFUNCTIONAL*.

BUT IN THE CASE OF THE *TRULY* BROKEN--

IT ONLY SERVES TO MAKE THE MEMORIES THAT MUCH *WORSE* BY CONTRAST.

GROWING UP SURROUNDED BY THAT RAGE, IT WAS NORMAL TO ME.

JUST HOW PEOPLE BEHAVED.

HOW A MAN BEHAVES.

TAUGHT ME JUST HOW HIGH THE ANGER BAR CAN GO.

AND IT GOES.

AND I BIT EVERYONE AROUND ME WITH THOSE TEETH HE GAVE ME.

AND EVEN AS I DID...

I COULD SEE IT.

INSIDE THE *PUNCTURE WOUNDS* I LEAVE.

FATHER'S DAY

RICK REMENDER
writer

DECLAN SHALVEY
artist

LEE LOUGHRIDGE
colorist

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letterer

TONY MOORE & VAL STAPLES
cover art

TOM BRENNAN
editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

THIRD HEADLINE THIS WEEK.

MING GEN. GROCERY DELI

Elmo's Pizza

POLICE

THEY WERE JUST WORKING ON THE WRONG NIGHT WHEN THE WRONG PERSON CAME BY.

JACK-O'-LANTERN MADE IT OUT OF CRIME-MASTER'S CHEMICAL PIT.

HE'S BEEN KILLING EVERY DAY SINCE.

LEAVING ME A TRAIL.

MING DELI

Elmo's Pizza

BELOW *TODAY'S* HEADLINE THERE WAS AN ARTICLE ON HOW BEST TO SPEND *FATHER'S DAY.*

TODAY.

JACK-O'-LANTERN... BRAINWASHED INTO THINKING CRIME-MASTER WAS HIS *DAD*.

MORE THAN BRAINWASHED; HE *GREW UP* UNDER THE MAN'S CARE.

ESCALATING THINGS ON *FATHER'S DAY*--

NO COINCIDENCE.

FIRST ONE SINCE THE OLD MAN *DIED*.

DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER WHAT IT WOULD FEEL LIKE.

SO BUSY PROTECTING MY FAMILY FROM THE *NIGHTMARE* I BROUGHT TO THEM.

JACK O'-LANTERN IS STILL OUT THERE.

NOT FOR LONG.

KILLING DOESN'T BEGIN TO DESCRIBE WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO HIM.

...THEM'S THE BREAKS, SNAPPY!

OH, YOU DIDN'T JUST GO THERE!

HA HA HA HA

THE HELL'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, SONNY BOY?

I MADE A TRADE WITH DAVID DOWN THE STREET... AND...AND I'D WANTED TO UNMAKE THE TRADE AFTER WE MADE IT...

BUT HE WOULDN'T GIVE ME MY CARDS BACK...AND... AND...

CAN'T LET PEOPLE SCREW WITH YOU LIKE THIS.

YOU TAKE SOMETHING FROM MY BOY?

SO. YOU THINK YOU CAN PUSH MY KID AROUND?

THINK AGAIN.

THE HELL HAPPENED, DAVID?

M-MR. THOMPSON +SOB+ SCREAMED AT ME...TOOK MY FOOTBALL CARDS...

YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH IT, FOLET?

WANT TO ESCALATE THIS?!

COME ON THEN. I'M RIGHT HERE-- NOTHING ELSE TO DO!

WHAT I THOUGHT.

EVEN NOW, WITH THE DISTANCE I HAVE, WITH THE REALITY OF IT ALL OUT IN THE OPEN--

MY OLD MAN WOULD'VE NEVER DONE SOMETHING LIKE THAT FOR ME.

I STILL DEFEND HIM.

I STILL THINK, WELL, MAYBE I *DESERVED* IT.

MAYBE HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ME.

MAYBE I'M NO GOOD.

I LET HIM *DOWN.*

NEVER DID *ENOUGH.*

NEVER MADE HIM *PROUD.*

I DESERVED IT.

ALL OF IT.

BUT THE TRUTH IS, HE WAS A *SOCIOPATH.*

HUMAN INTERACTION WAS JUST A DANCE FOR HIM.

A GAME HE PLAYED TO GET THINGS HE *WANTED.*

HE DIDN'T LOVE ME BECAUSE HE DIDN'T LOVE *ANYONE.*

BECAUSE HE WAS BROKEN DOWN THE *MIDDLE.*

YEAH, WELL, THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL *THE THOMPSON HAIL MARY PLAY.*

IT'S WHY I'M THE *QB*, LIZ. AND WHY I'M THE GUY *YOU* SHOULD GO TO PROM WITH--

KROOM!!!

YOU GOT A SPEEDING TICKET AND DIDN'T TELL ME?

KEEP OUT

YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD HIDE IT?

I WAS GOING TEN OVER THE LIMIT--IT ISN'T A BIG DEAL--

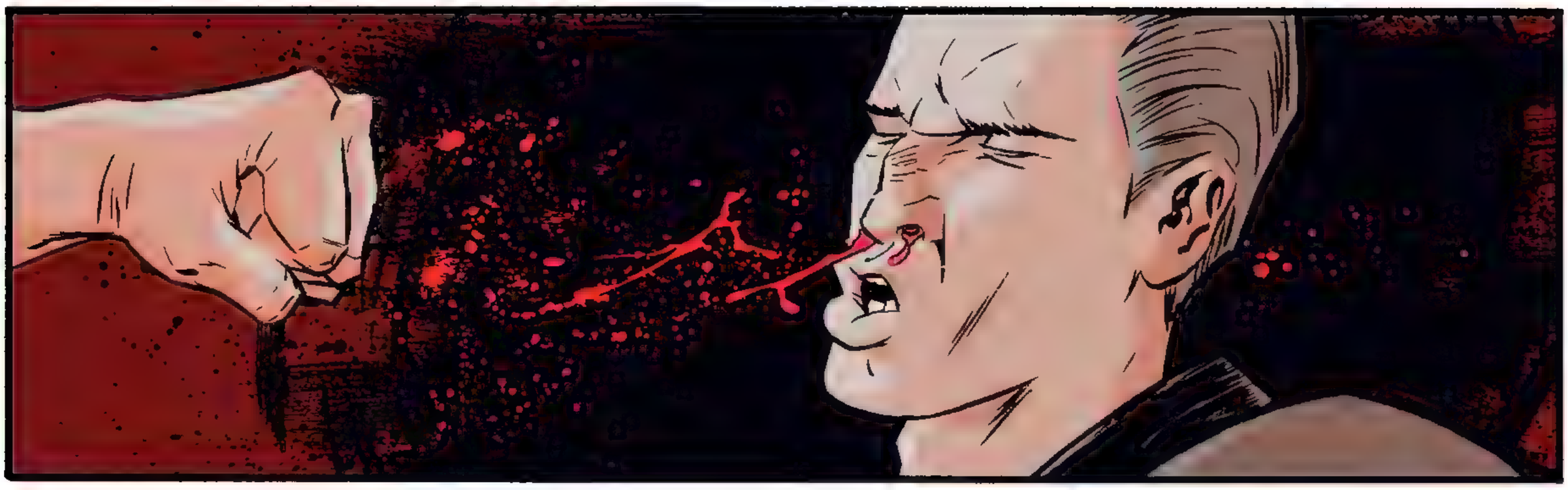
YOU KNOW WHAT THIS DOES TO MY INSURANCE RATES?

YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THIS WILL COST ME?!

GET OFF OF ME!

YOU WATCH THAT MOUTH OF YOURS, *SONNY BOY*, OR YOU'LL BE *ON THE STREET!*

IF YOU'RE GOING TO KICK ME OUT I'LL GIVE YOU A REAL *REASON* TO!



BUT IT'S LIKE THEY SAY...

...YOU ONLY REMEMBER THE BAD STUFF.

BAD STUFF THAT LEAVES AN IMPRESSION THAT CLOUDS THE MAJORITY OF NORMALCY.

HE WASN'T ALWAYS *BAD.*

HE WASN'T JUST THAT GUY WHO *LOST HIS MIND.*

BUT THE NORMAL DAYS IN-BETWEEN MADE THE REST ALL THE *WORSE.*

LULLED INTO A BELIEF HE'D CHANGED.

THAT LAST TIME WAS THE *LAST TIME.*

HE'D NEVER DO IT AGAIN.

HAVE A SEAT, SONNY BOY.

LET'S HAVE A TALK.

KLANGG

SPIDER-MAN

KEEP

WHY DO YOU LET HIM DO THIS?

WELL, NOW, EUGENE-- *YOU* PROVOKED *HIM*. YOU KNOW YOUR FATHER'S TEMPER.

HE'S CRAZY. HE'S CRAZY AND HE BEATS YOUR KIDS AND YOU DON'T DO *ANYTHING* ABOUT IT!

I AM *NOT* GOING TO SIT HERE AND LISTEN TO YOU *BADMOUTH* THE MAN I MARRIED. HE HAD A ROUGH CHILDHOOD.

YOU CAN TELL YOURSELF WHATEVER YOU WANT BUT I WAS THERE, EUGENE. IT WAS *YOUR* FAULT.

YOU JUST CAN'T TALK TO YOUR FATHER THAT WAY.

YOU KNOW, I REALLY NEVER DID LIKE YOU.

IT TOOK ALL MY STRENGTH TO SIT IN A ROOM WITH YOU FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR WITHOUT CRUSHING YOUR SKULL IN.

YOU SON OF A BITCH...

YOU ROTTEN SON OF A BITCH!

KRAKK

BUT I'M BACK TO FINISH IT, SONNY BOY.

BACK TO KICK YOUR ASS ONE LAST TIME.

BLEEP

BLEEP

BLEEEEEE—

WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT?

WE WON THE GAME!

I MADE THE WINNING PLAY.

FAKED 'EM *OUT*, RAN IT RIGHT *IN*.

OH. GOOD FOR YOU.

YOUR COUSIN GRADUATED MEDICAL SCHOOL THIS WEEK.

KID'S A DAMN GENIUS.

"YOU LET ME KNOW IF YOU DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT, WILL YOU?"

KOFF KOFF

WAS IT NICE GETTING TO SEE YOUR DAD, EUGENE?

I LOST MY DAD RECENTLY.

IT HURTS.

THIS IS GONNA HURT *WORSE.*

SHNKK

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU ABOUT THIS FILTHY ROOM, LITTLE PIGGIE!

FLAKK

STOP!

KRASH

SSHEDD

AT LEAST I KNEW MY DAD *LOVED* ME.

KNEW HE WAS *PROUD* OF ME.

ALL THE THINGS I MADE JESSE TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DAD.

REALLY ROUGH STUFF, EUGENE.

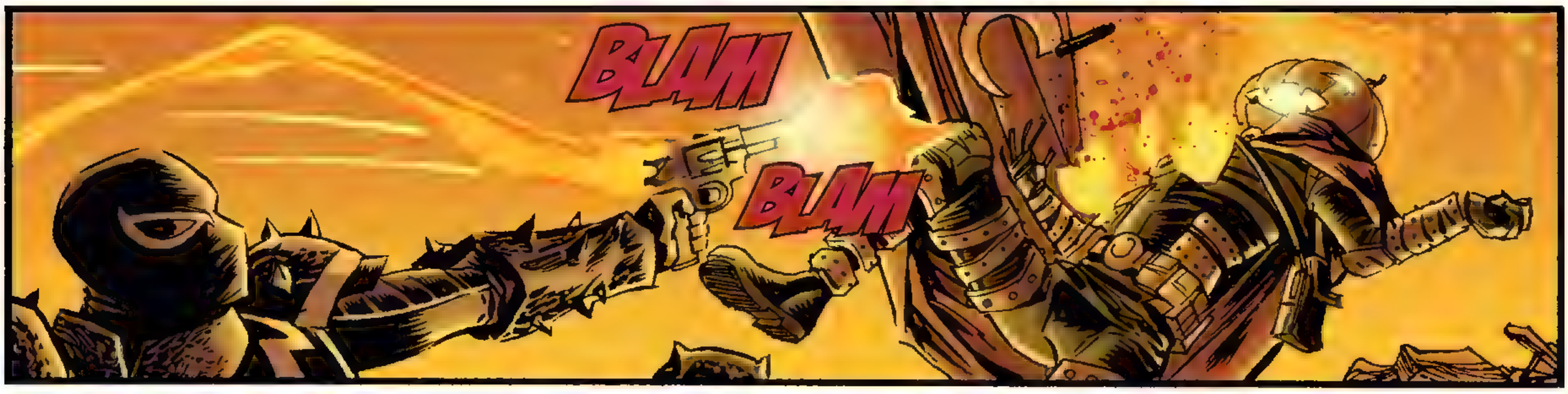
ALMOST MADE ME FEEL *SORRY* ENOUGH FOR YOU TO LEAVE ALL THIS *ARCH-ENEMY* BUSINESS ALONE.

IT'S INTERESTING; YOU MUST FEEL LIKE PEOPLE WILL CUT YOU A *BREAK* GIVEN WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH.

BUT YOU AN' ME, WE'RE LIKE *BROTHERS*.

I KNOW YOU WOULDN'T WANT ME TO *PITY* YOU.

I KNOW YOU WOULDN'T *WANT SPECIAL TREATMENT* BECAUSE OF WHO YOUR *DAD* WAS.


BLAM
BLAM

GHRAGHH!
SKRA

TROKK

I'M POISONED. YOU'RE RIGHT.

THERE'S NO GETTING IT OUT.

THE WOUND IS SEALED SHUT.

THEIR HATRED WILL ALWAYS RUN THROUGH OUR VEINS, JACK.

BUT IF WE MAKE DIFFERENT CHOICES...

WHO KNOWS?

WHAT CELL NUMBER?

BLOCK D WITH THE REST OF THE THIRD-RATE NOBODIES.

...IT GOT OUT OF HAND BUT THAT'S ALL OF IT.

IF YOU WANT TO CUT ME I GET IT. I OWN IT ALL...

"...I KNOW I MISMANAGED EVERYTHING."

"Finish every day and
be done with it.

"You have done
what you could.

"Some blunders
and absurdities
no doubt crept in.

"Forget them
as soon as
you can.

"Tomorrow
is a new day.

"You shall begin it serenely and with too high a
spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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It feels good to put Venom issue 22 to bed. It feels good to have come to an end of my run. Don't get me wrong, I'm sorry I have to leave the book, but it feels good because I got to do most everything that I had intended to. I had so many ideas at the onset I was always awaiting the book's certain and imminent cancellation that would leave the ideas in my morgue file forever.

When we started the book, we were all prepared for it to fly under the radar. We were sure we'd only get 4 or 5 issues out of it. It's a safe way to approach these things – high expectations lead to resentments. For one we were taking two different beloved characters and smashing them together in a new costume. That's always a risky endeavor. Could Flash Thompson carry his own solo title if he had the Venom symbiote?

It feels good to be able to look back and answer yes.

I'll confess that when Stephen Wacker approached me about the project, before I had heard some of the ideas he and Dan Slott had cooked up, I was a bit hesitant. I was a big Spider-Man fan for many years leading up to the creation of Venom, and while those 1st few appearances were very exciting, I didn't love where he eventually grew, and I didn't feel I had any stories I wanted to tell with the character.

But then Stephen went on to tell me that it would be Flash Thompson wearing the symbiote--Flash who had lost his legs heroically in service of his country and who had suffered an abusive, alcoholic father and struggled with addiction himself--I began to imagine this man – an alcoholic, a hero, a bully, a victim of abuse, and now a veteran bonded to an alien symbiote that feeds off of the very same emotions that fuel most alcoholics. I immediately saw a dozen stories in my head. Stories with a ticking time bomb always counting down, waiting for the moment when this hero would lose his temper and fuel the literal beast on his back.

I spent the subsequent few weeks on the phone with Dan Slott, Stephen Wacker and artist Tony Moore, digging into all of the various possibilities for the character. The notebook filled quickly. That's always a sign that you've made the right decision to write a project. Once Tony started turning in his new designs for the character I knew without a doubt we were onto something special, something that had an opportunity to catch on with the fans, something that could last by reinventing these two popular characters in a new and exciting way.

So it feels good to look back and see that we succeeded. I hope in the course of the series that Venom and Jack-O'-Lantern have earned a rivalry that excited you good readers and feels earned. One thing Stephen wanted us to do was to take B and C list villains and build them up into real threats. That's a challenge I'm always up for as I stand by the belief that there is no such thing as a bad character. Many of my favorite characters are considered in the B&C list: the Human Fly, Jack-O'-Lantern, Megatak, and Death Adder were good examples of that. So it was a challenge that I was very excited to accept – and am happy with the results.

For those of you who've stuck with us and continue with the series, I hope we have made you care for Flash Thompson and his life and adventures. I really have fallen in love with the character and feel so grateful that so many of you have as well.

I want to thank **Tony Moore, Tom Fowler, Stefano Caselli, Lan Medina, Kev Walker, Declan Shalvey, Joe Quesada, John Rauch, Chris Sotomayor, Nelson Decastro, Terry Pallot, Antonio Fabela, Andres Mossa, Marte Gracia, Lee Loughridge, Mike McKone, Morry Hollowell, Michael Del Mundo, Joe Caramagna, Clayton, Cowles, Cory Petit,** and **Chris Eliopoulos** for doing all of the hard work. In my mind the artist defines the majority of what makes a comic book a success. They are the directors, actors, cinematographers, and in the end the final cut editors. The issues of my run that have worked have worked because of their ability to tell story and to convey emotion with pictures.

I also want to thank Stephen Wacker for having faith that Tony Moore and I were the right people to rebuild this new Venom. It was a big responsibility--Wacker's faith in us and hours of brainstorming, made our success possible.

It has been my pleasure to work with Tom Brennan and Cullen over this last arc of the series as well. Having seen them both at work, and knowing what they have brought to this last arc, I know the series is in good hands. To give credit where credit is due: Bunn carried most of the heavy lifting on the Savage Six arc. Were it not for his tireless efforts I don't think my schedule would've enabled me to stick around to see this story to its conclusion. So get ready for Mr. Bunn and Mr. Brennan to grab the reins and ride this black beauty to some crazy new places. I've had my fun beating up poor Flash, hopefully they'll take more mercy on him than I did.

Rick Remender

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